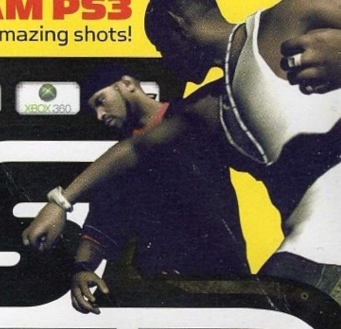
IN!
NINTENDO DS!

MARIO AND LUIGI!
Reviewed FIRST and BEST inside!

CRAZY FROG
Worst game ever? Go to p71!

DEF JAM PS3
See the first amazing shots!



PS2 XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE PC DS GAME BOY ADVANCE PSP N-GAGE XBOX 360

GAMES MASTER

THE MASTER OF GAMES SINCE

Feb 2006
GM 169

EXCLUSIVE PLAYTEST!

FIFA STREET 2

Coolest footy game ever? All you can street ONLY IN THIS MAG!

542 NEW SCREENS

CONSOLE WAR
PS3 VS Xbox 360 VS REVOLUTION!
NEW SHOTS AND FACTS!

FIRST HANDS-ON!

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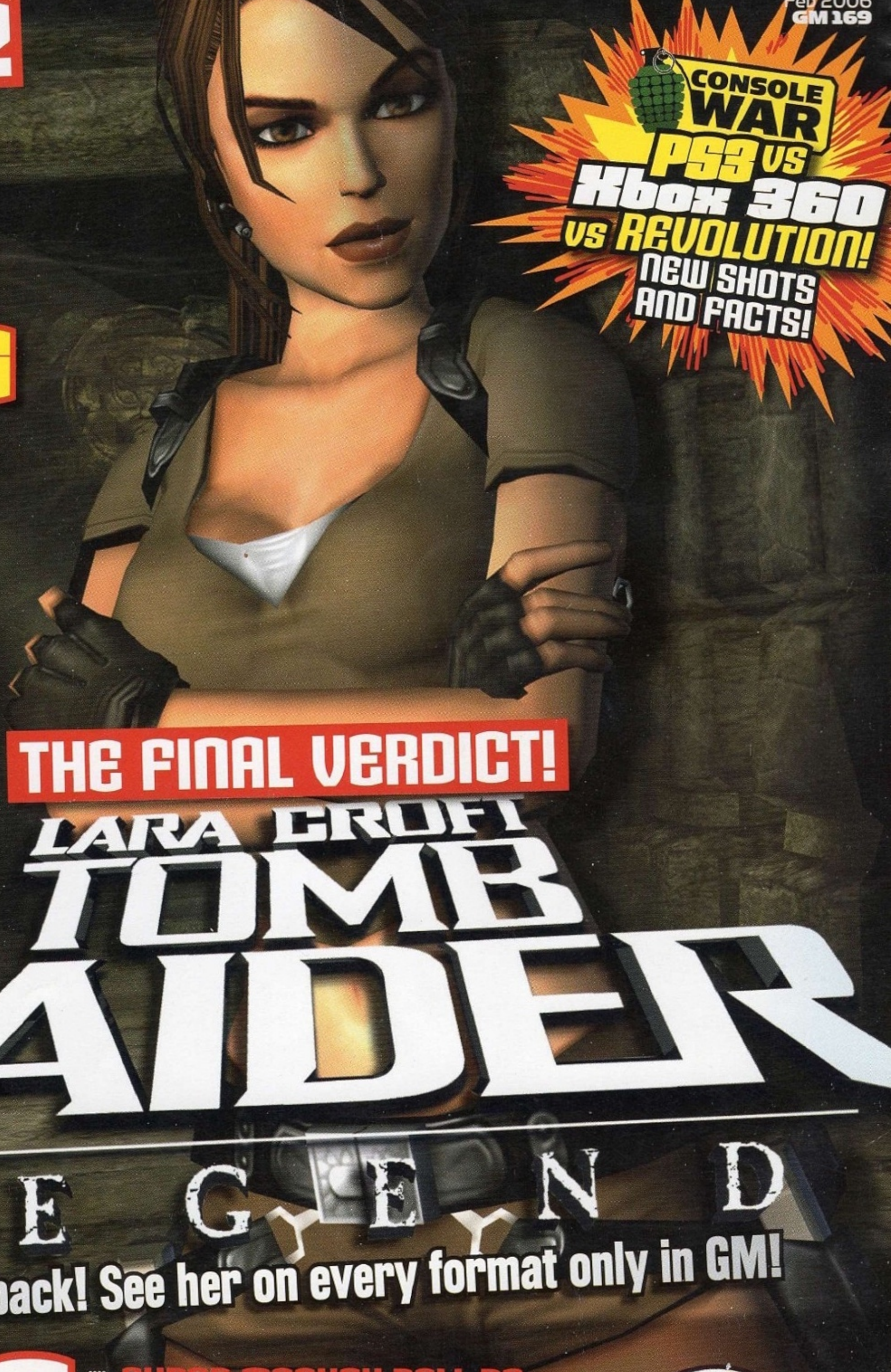

THE FINAL VERDICT!

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER LEGEND

Lara's back! See her on every format only in GM!

2006 NEW YEAR NEW GAMES

- SUPER MONKEY BALL DS
- SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS
- SOCOM 3
- POKEMON DS
- 24: THE GAME
- SUPERMAN
- HITMAN
- GHOST RECON 360

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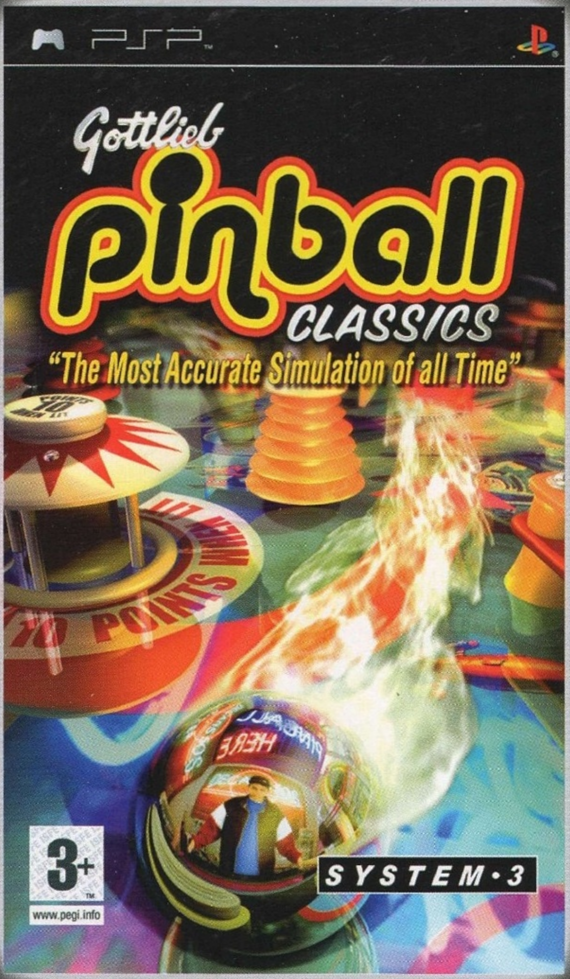
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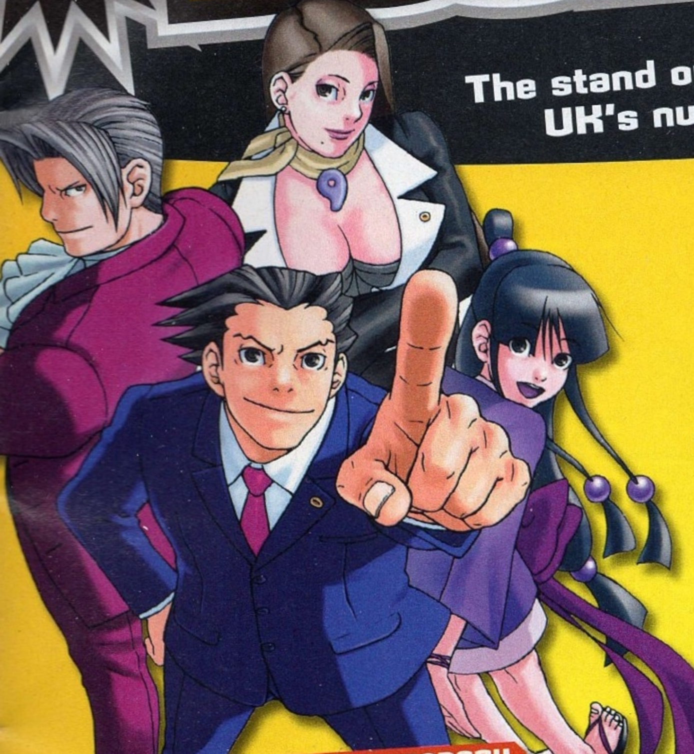
BEST BITS!

The stand out stuff this month on the UK's number one games mag!



PHOENIX WRIGHT: ACE ATTORNEY

p70 The courtroom is buzzing. The hapless defendant, Larry Butz, happens to be our best mate. We're also his defence lawyer. The odds seem overwhelmingly stacked against the Butz, but we've been doing our homework. Yelling "Hold it!" into our DS's mike, we present some vital contradictory evidence. Gasps echo around the court, the prosecutor roars in dismay – and our pal Larry is declared innocent by the slapheaded judge. Strike one for the good guys, and another glorious victory for *Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney*...

FIRST AND BEST!

LARA CROFT
TOMB
RAIDER
LEGEND

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

p46 One of the highlights of this issue was seeing the latest version of *Tomb Raider: Legend* and coming away very happy indeed. Since *Angel of Darkness*, Lara Croft has been a cross between something of a joke and a horror story you'd tell gaming heroes to keep them awake at night. But we believe that *Legend* will change all that and soon Lara will be back to her iconic best.

WELCOME TO GAMESMASTER

GM is the longest running games mag in Britain. While this means it's old enough to occasionally favour a body warmer, it also has a massive advantage in the important business of Knowing What We're Talking About. This mag remembers when Lara was an unknown, making her exclusive debut on Sega's Saturn console in 1996. Lots has happened to Ms Croft since then, and we've been there every step of the way – including telling you quite how bad 2003's *Tomb Raider Angel of Darkness* was. See page 46 to see why the new game looks like a return to form.

Course, this is also the only mag where you'll see how Lara is looking on every machine. Let me know what else you want to see in 2006 by emailing gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk or sending a letter to the usual address. Enjoy your *GM!*

Robin

Robin
The Ed

MADDEN NFL 2006

p65 We're five minutes into *Madden NFL 2006*, and we're spellbound. Watching the pass intently with his beady next-gen eyes, our wide receiver collects the pigskin in his toned arms before grunting in surprise and pain as he's nailed by his marker. From the beads of sweat oozing from the pores of his skin to scarily realistic freckles and stubble, it's a fearsome glimpse of next-gen oomph. We must have spent at least 10 minutes replaying the scene over and over and over... and over. Gaming might never be the same again.

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST SELLING MULTI-FORMAT MAGAZINE!

SELECT YOUR MODE

GAMES MASTER

THE MASTER OF GAMES SINCE 1993

COVER STORIES

FIFA STREET 2 .... PAGE 26
Get picked first for our exclusive kickabout!
THE GODFATHER .... PAGE 16
Hands-on verdict on the next *GTA!*
TOMB RAIDER LEGENDS .... PAGE 46
Lara's back where she belongs – in *GM!*
DEF JAM 3 .... PAGE 08
Hi-def dust-ups from the original bad boy brawler

100% NEW!

2006 means next gen! Come, drink in amazing new screens from the future! 008

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Free game info's here! 013

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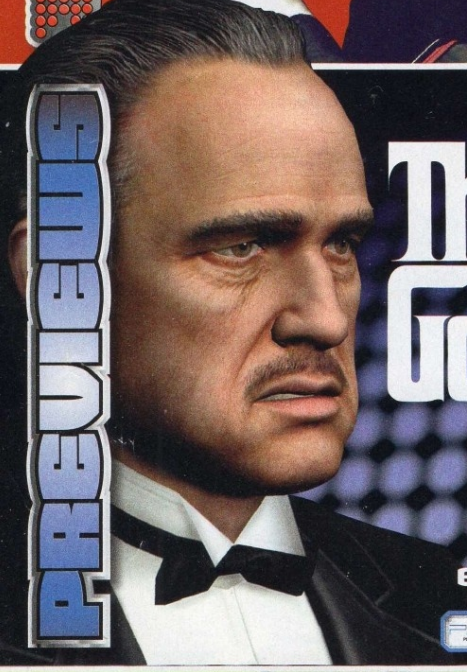


The Godfather THE GAME

Grandad Theft Auto? Find out everything NOW!

PS2 XBOX PC PSP 016

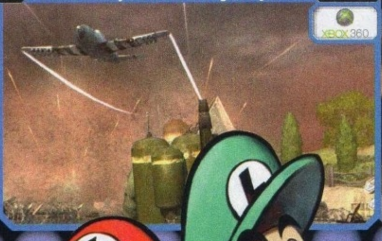
PS2 XBOX PC XBOX 360

We fight future war on 360 in *Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter!* 020

PS2 XBOX GAMECUBE PSP PC DS

p.26 FIFA STREET 2 Join us for a Brazilliant first-to-five kickabout! It's the FIFA follow up with mad skillz and no frozen pitches!

The barcoded baldy's back in *Hitman: Blood Money!* Is it his best game yet? 034



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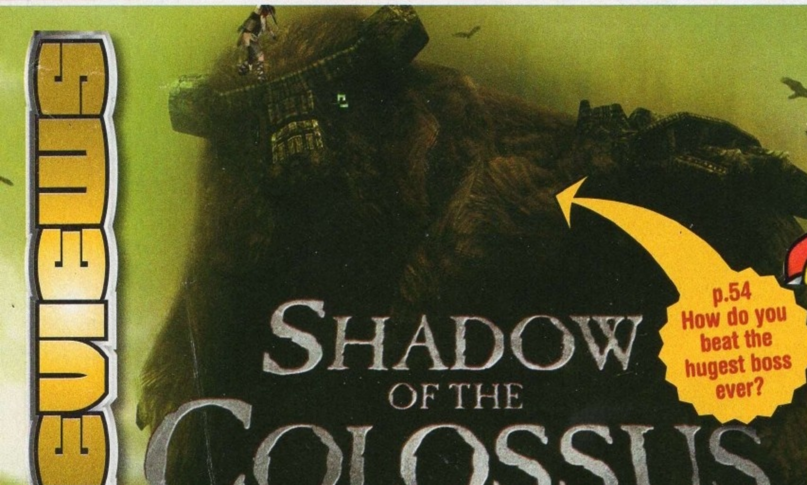
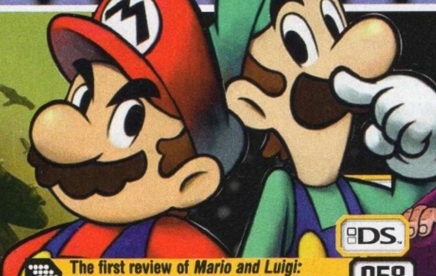


SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

p.54 How do you beat the hugest boss ever?

The Seriously BIG Review! PS2 054



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DS

Nurse, the screens! We get the goriest game ever in our (steady) hands! 069

DS

Anime legal adventure? OBJECTION! *Phoenix Wright Ace Attourney* rules! 070

WE ♥ GAMES

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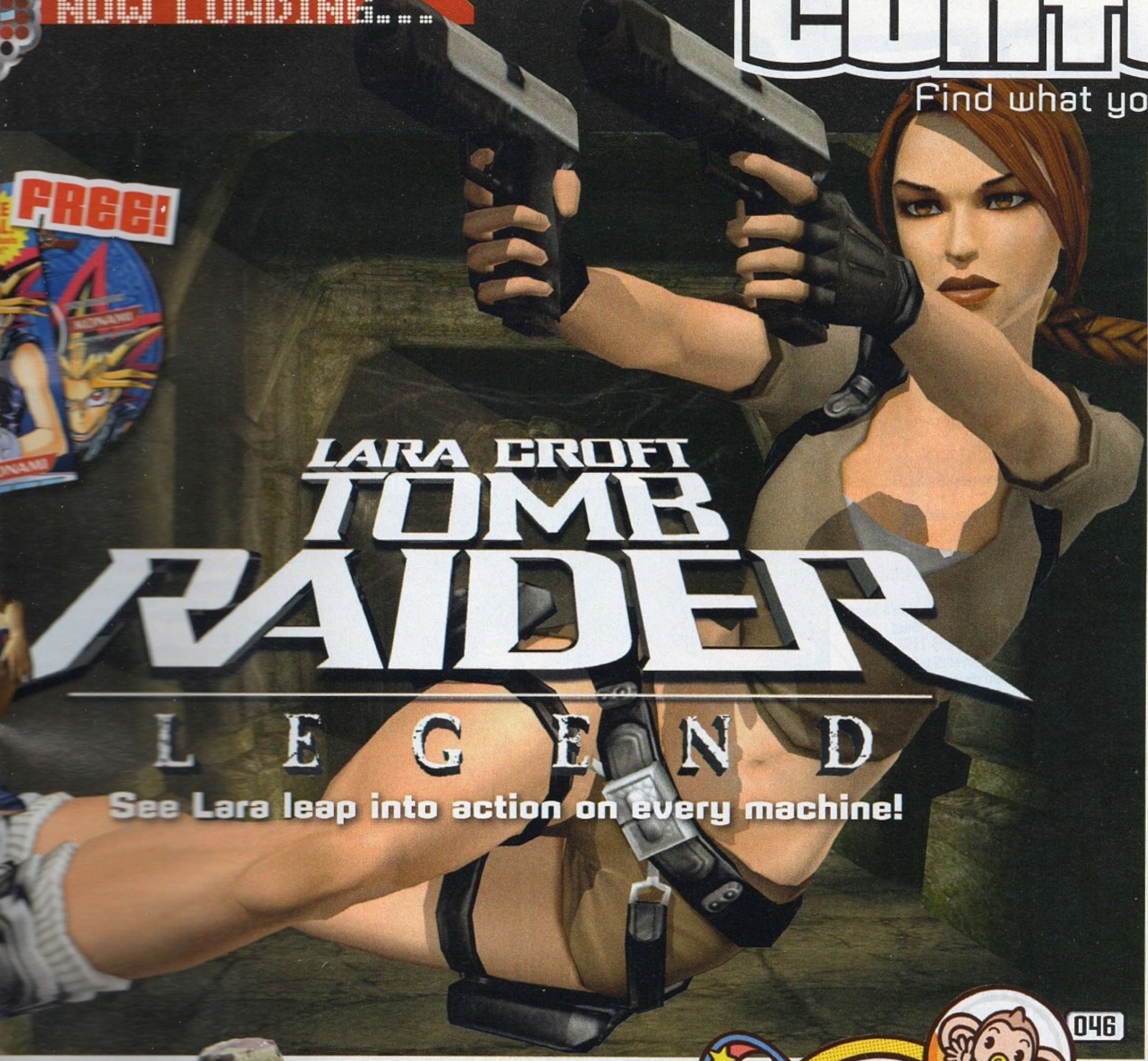

See Lara leap into action on every machine!

046

SOCOM 3: US Navy SEALS: so stealthy and top secret we can't tell you it's on page... 062

Simians in spheres! *Super Monkey Ball Touch & Rolls* on [illegible] two screens! 067

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YOUR TOP 10 TIPS
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OVER £2000 OF PRIZES TO WIN!

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TEAM GM

You can tell they're professionals, can't you?

MARK

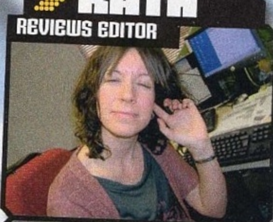
REVIEWS

FAVOURITE GAME:
Trauma Centre
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
When she got crushed by a pyramid at the end of number four
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: Retro gaming

'Playing *Phoenix Wright Ace Attorney* reminded me of a time I defended myself in front of the law. I was accused of breaking a restaurant table's legs, so I brought the broken furniture in to prove my innocence. But I was told my evidence wouldn't stand up in court.'

KATH

REVIEWS EDITOR



'Playing *Trauma Centre* reminded me of the time I went to the doctors, as I had carrot wedged in my ear and banana stuck up my nose. Apparently I wasn't eating properly.'

FAVOURITE GAME:
Ico
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
Entering a unexplored tomb, finding a rare breed of Siberian Tiger, then shooting it dead.
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: The Xbox 360 Arcade

GERAINT

REVIEWS

FAVOURITE GAME:
Mario & Luigi
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
Discovering you could do hand-stands and proper dives
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: The Revolution! [the Nintendo console we presume]

To start the New Year, Geraint has decided to find religion – he has started reading the Bible and he's learning an awful lot. For instance, he's discovered that an archive isn't where Noah kept his bees after all.

JOEL

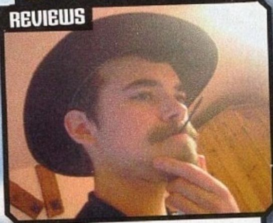
FAVOURITE GAME:
Trauma Centre
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
Jumping off cliffs and breaking Lara's legs again and again
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: the outlandish peripheral

After playing the game, Joel went to see *Narnia* at the cinema, but wasn't impressed. 'The Lion and Witch were fantastic, but I thought the performance of the Wardrobe was just far too wooden.'

REVIEWS

ADAM

REVIEWS



FAVOURITE GAME:
Battle of Prince of Persia
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
Mocking the Endangered Species Act for fun and profit
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: Champions (and, also, crepes)

Adam has been attempting to improve himself in 2006, as now he's trying to write his reviews in cursive. Which is a real effort, as he originally thought cursive was what you did when you stubbed your toe.

MIKE

FAVOURITE GAME:
The Outfit
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
Screaming like a girl when discovering the dinosaur in the original game
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: The high-definition dog

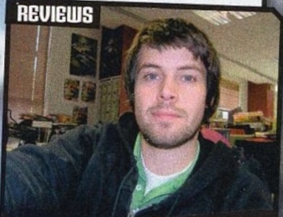
PREVIEWS

I love Lara Croft, as it's through her games that I learnt a lot about women. For instance, do you know why girls spend so much money on make-up and perfume? It's because they're ugly and they stink.

DAVE

FAVOURITE GAME:
Urban Reign
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
When Lara didn't given any money to the tramp in *Angel of Darkness*
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: Hype and anticipation

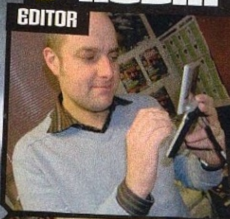
REVIEWS



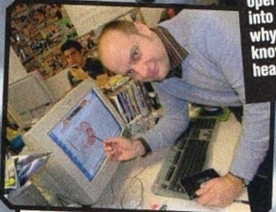
Dave actually used to be a lawyer, and has kept many of the characteristics of a lawyer. For a start, you can tell when he's lying: his lips move.

ROBIN

EDITOR



Robin has a curious way of playing *Trauma Centre*, as when attempting a heart operation he made an incision into the belly. When asked why he said, 'Well, everyone knows the best way to man's heart is through his stomach.'



FAVOURITE GAME:
Trauma Centre
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
Turning the lead bars into gold in the original game
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: The next-gen console war! And skidoos

ALEX

FAVOURITE GAME:
Full Spectrum Warrior: Ten Hammers
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
The opening of *Tomb Raider* where you slid down a slope into a spiked pit.
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: Pre-orders and queuing

PREVIEWS

Alex has just been to see the latest *Harry Potter* film and it seems to have upset him. "Well, it's just political correctness gone mad! We used to burn witches and wizards, and now they've got their own school!'

STEVE

FAVOURITE GAME:
Trauma Centre
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
In the first game when she broke her neck and the camera zoomed in on her dead face.
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: the beard

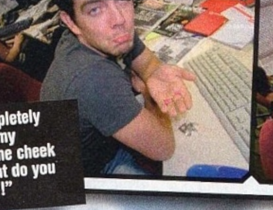
Steve has been playing his Xbox 360 online enabling him to play games with loads of people from around the world! So what sort of people have you playing against?
"Well, there's been Brazilians..."
Brazilians! That's *a lot* of people! But where were they from?

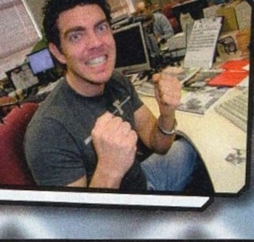
REVIEWS

ROB

FAVOURITE GAME:
Phoenix Wright
FONDEST TOMB RAIDER MOMENT:
Being attacked by a Conga eel in by the submerged shipwreck in *Tomb Raider 2*
2006 WILL BE THE YEAR OF: *Elder Scrolls 4: Oblivion*

NEWS EDITOR





My doctor should play *Trauma Centre* – he's completely useless. He gave my some suppositories to help my constipation and they didn't work. Then he had the cheek to ask me if I'd been taking them, so I said, "What do you think I've been doing? Shoving them up my ass?!"

GAMES MASTER

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100% NEW!

2006 kicks off with a blast of new next-gen games, amazing screens and a free Yu-Gi-Oh game! Happy new gear!

WIK HEAD

If you've got an Xbox 360, check out Live Arcade's selection of small, cheap and extremely playable distractions. Newest among them is *Wik: Fable of Souls,* an energetic platform-puzzler starring a big-eyed weirdo who leaps and loops his way around the screen with his sticky tongue. The controls are strange to begin with, but it's worth persisting with – it's one of the best games available on Live Arcade.

360 GOES FOR THE EYES

New titles prove next-gen graphics war is here!...

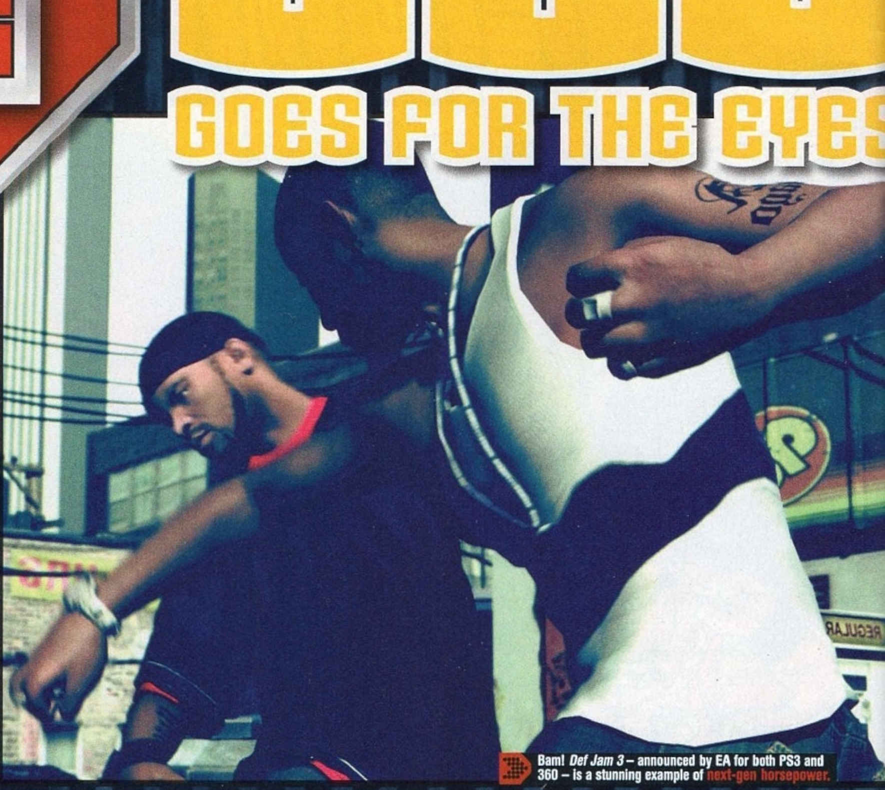
So, the first generation of Xbox 360 games have come and gone. From the eye-poppingly good to the eye-gougingly bad, we've seen it all.

For every *Madden,* with all of its sumptuous facial detail, there's a *FIFA* with its grotesque caricatures. Some games, like *Kong* and *Gun,* didn't even bother adding any graphical enhancement apart from HD capability. Shame on them.

Next year, however, it's all set to change as developers get to grips with the hardware, PS3 and Revolution touch down and the HD era begins in earnest. Just look at the incredible titles all around you for the definitive proof.

Microsoft might be winning the battle, but with Sony and Nintendo set to chuck their next-gen hats into the ring in 2006, who'll win the war is anybody's guess. It'll look a lot like this...0

Bash! 360 and PS3 are set to slog it out for the title of most powerful machine. Which will triumph?



Bam! *Def Jam 3* – announced by EA for both PS3 and 360 – is a stunning example of next-gen horsepower.

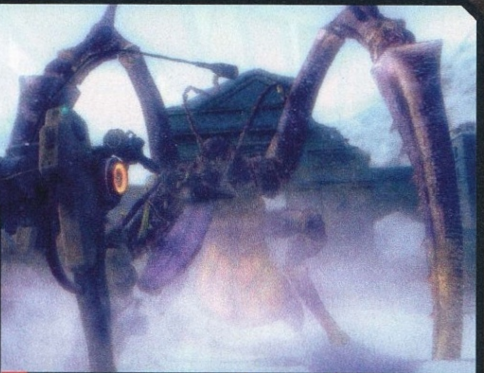
Check out that emerald tinge on his fur collar. Hardly macho, but still lovely.

You'll get to pilot a mech, and become the galaxy's most effective insect repellent.

LOST PLANET

Capcom's latest, and an Xbox 360 exclusive to boot, is looking like a superb mix of *Steel Battalion, Starship Troopers* and, erm, snowboarding. In other words, it's an intense action game featuring Kong-sized robots, Godzilla-sized insects and Iceland-sized quantities of snow. And you'd expect it to be a superb mix, what with it being co-created by the cream of the development teams behind the *Onimusha* and *Devil May Cry* series. So, while we're waiting patiently for Capcom to get around to finishing both *Resident Evil 5* and *Dead Rising,* we'll keep ourselves toasty with the prospect of *Lost Planet* and its destructive, amazing battles against some of the ugliest spiders in the universe.

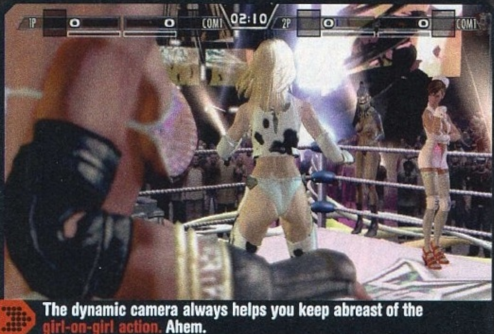
It's like a festive *Gears of War.* Check out the lava-lined codpiece.



Shoot (or stab) it in the smashing orangey bit, we're guessing. Still, it looks absolutely gorgeous (or terrifying), eh?

RUMBLE ROSES XX

Each of the saucy wrestle-'em-up *Rumble Roses* combatants has a distinct... er, 'personality', from Cow-Girl Dixie to schoolgirl Reiko and naughty nursie Anaesthesia. Now featuring over 20 female (naturally) characters, XX (or should that be XXX?) is set to raise videogame voyeurism to entirely new levels.



The dynamic camera always helps you keep abreast of the girl-on-girl action. Ahem.

BURNOUT: REVENGE

The fastest, most adrenaline-fuelled racer of them all gets a glorious next-gen paintjob. More traffic, more crashes, vicious pile-ups, all-new open-ended crash junctions and more speed than you ever dreamed was possible. If *Revenge* on PS2 and Xbox was lightning, this may be quicksilver.

Now *that's* a wreck. Enhanced crash physics mean we can total our rides.

Advanced blur effects mean the background is just a well... blur.

SUPES FOR ONE

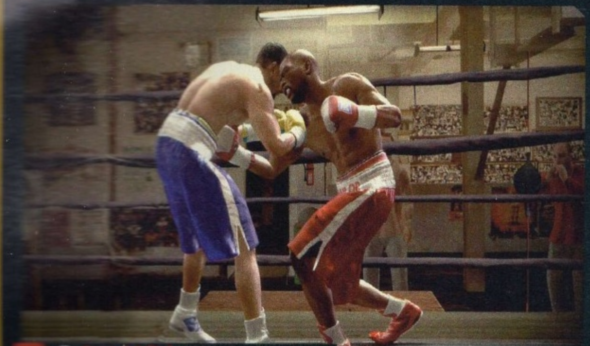
After *Batman Begins* and *The Godfather*, EA is planning on riding yet another movie to the top of the charts: *Superman Returns*. Due to hit cinemas in mid-2006, the movie is the direct inspiration for EA's virtual spin-off, which will apparently offer a world big and roomy enough for players to get a great feel for being a superhero, something that was captured so well by *Hulk: Ultimate Destruction*. It's a long way off, but, y'know – he flies awful fast, Superman.

HL2 HITS ARCADES

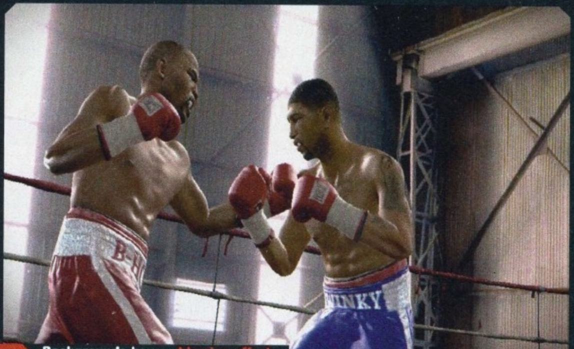
Our pals in the Far East just can't get enough of Gordon Freeman. Namco's *Half Life 2: Survivor* features an offline single-player story, but the real fun surrounds the 1-8 player link up. Simply sit in the specially built cabinet (complete with multiple joysticks and foot peddles) and let the Deathmatch action commence! You can even record your game progress via memory card using the inbuilt IC card slot. Fingers crossed it comes to Europe soon…

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

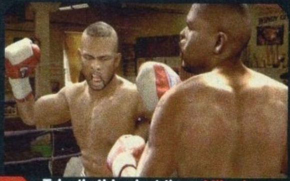
After that tech-demo at E3 2005, everyone casually assumed that the next *Fight Night* was going to be a PS3 exclusive. Wrong. Forget *NBA* or *Madden* – *Round 3* is the real benchmark for next-gen niceness, with bruising character models who look – quite simply – *human*, from their skin texture to their proportions to the way their cheek reverberates and bruises upon receiving a haymaker. Oh, and they're prone to vomiting a heady mixture of blood and drool as well. Seconds out… *Round 3!*



So damn detailed you can see every last freckle, scar and liver spot. Mmm…

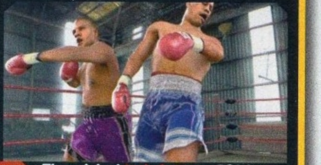


Backgrounds have a blurring effect, keeping your focus on the fighters.

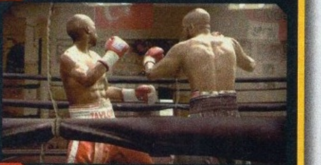


Take that! Look at those billowing cheeks, he'll feel that tomorrow.

So, which is better – E3 PS3 tech demo or 360? Based on the evidence we've seen so far Xbox edges it, but don't go reading too much into that since the two versions are shaping up to be entirely different titles. "Think of it more of a *Fight Night* 4 PS3 version and Fight Night 3 Xbox 360 version", said EA's Kudo Tsunoda.



The original tech demo on PS3 last May. It seemed good at the time…



That's better. Does *Fight Night* prove 360 is the true king of the ring?

UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2007

Every man and his dog seems to have licensed their engine, but lest we forget, Epic's outrageously successful multi-player shooter is actually a game in its own right. And what a game! Possibly the most gorgeous 360 title we've laid eyes on… explosions, lighting, bump mapping – *Tourney 2007* is the daddy of them all. And you'll even get to ride hoverboards while blasting away! Unreal.

What to expect from next-gen…

SURFACE VALUE Crisp, fine textures, boggling lighting and jeep-flipping destruction.

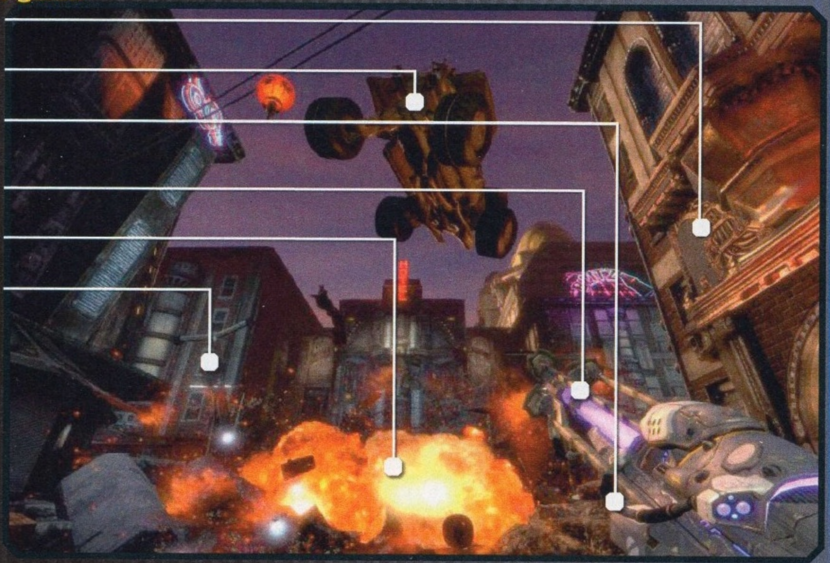
JEEP FLIGHTS One of *UT2007's* vehicles, making a successful return from *UT2004*.

STICK STILL *UT2007* will be as fast-paced and flighty as *UT2004*. So no standing around admiring explosions.

GUN FUN This railgun-type blaster looks immense – as you'd expect from *Unreal*.

SEX-PLOSION Thought *Call of Duty 2's* smoke was excellent? Check out this atomic bad boy.

WHAT'S THIS? This looks like the leg of an ironing board. But it's probably the windscreen.



The lighting and character models are unbelievably gorgeous.

JADED JAPAN

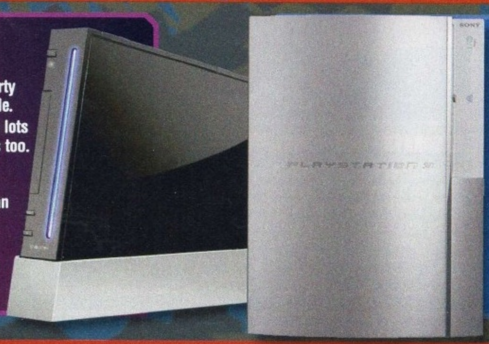
Microsoft's Xbox has never been popular in Japan and it seems Microsoft are in for a tough ride convincing them to buy its replacement. Units were apparently still gathering dust on the shelves hours into the launch. Some Internet sites even reported that the price of the 360 has already been slashed in Japan, although this only seems to be happening in shops offering a special deal with an Internet provider. Still, it's not a good start for Microsoft and the most games-obsessed country in the world…

The Xbox 360 is already being sold for a third of the price over in Japan.

CONSOLE WAR!

NEXT-GEN RUMOUR CONTROL

It's not all quiet on the other next-gen fronts…



REVOLUTION

A Nintendo spokesperson recently commented that the majority of third-party developer expect it to be easy to port their games to Nintendo's new console.

GM verdict: Hopefully, then the Revolution will be well supported with lots of games, but we're hoping it'll be the machine with the most original titles too.

Developers have revealed that developing for the Revolution isn't like developing for a next-gen console because it's not much more powerful than the original Xbox. They've also said it doesn't have enough memory – just 128MB. Will this be the least powerful next-gen console?

GM Verdict: With Nintendo still tight lipped on the Revolution's specs, it's hard to say. We can't wait to see the first batch of games soon.

PS3

Capcom has revealed their hopes to release Resident Evil 5 on PS3 and Xbox 360 simultaneously even though they're not even sure yet exactly when the PS3 will launch.

GM Verdict: It's pretty likely. Although we're hoping that doesn't mean 360 owners have to wait a minute longer for it than they have to.

Sony will launch the PS3 in Japan this Spring and the US in the autumn with a price tag of $300-$400.

GM Verdict: Hmm. Seems very soon. We're betting that there may be a proper playable showing of the console at E3 in May, fingers crossed, but it's unlikely to be released long before Christmas 2006 in Europe

Sheena
Ah, no. y...you don't have to thank me, it's nothing. Don't mention it.

>> TEMPEST 2006

Although Nintendo's DS is already filling up with some great quirky offerings, the handheld isn't exactly known for deep, complex gaming at the moment. But that's all set to change with Namco's announcement of its RPG, *Tales of Tempest*. Using the stylus and mike, you'll control Caius Qualls, a 15-year-old boy on a journey to find his true parents. Out in Japan in early 2006, expect this *Tempest* to swirl into the UK sometime later on in the year. Should make a change from all that dog-walking, at least.

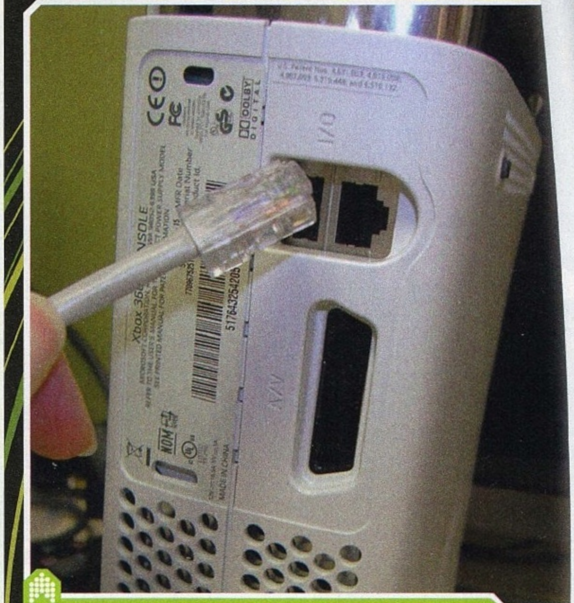
GET A LIVE!

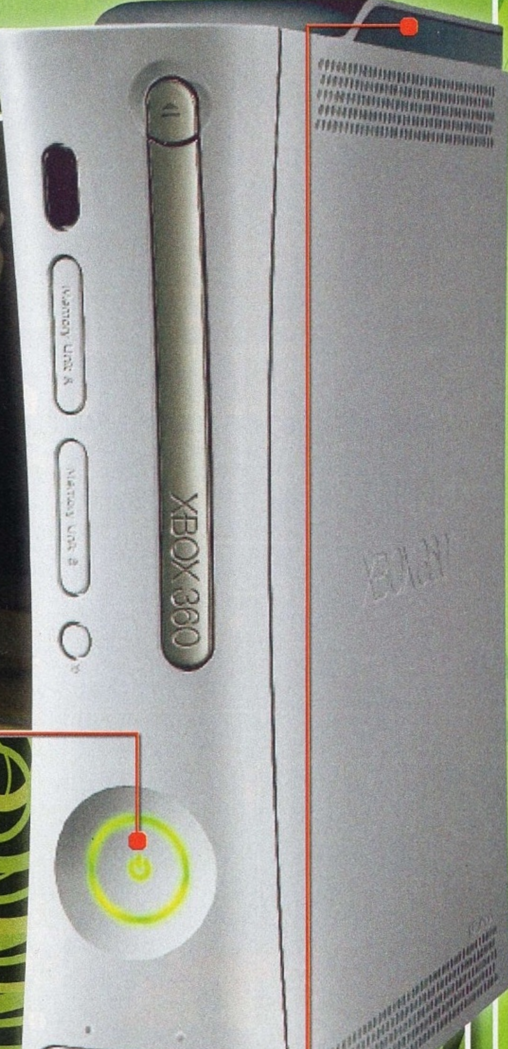
Want to take Xbox 360 online? Read on, intrepid explorer

Now that the launch shortages are a well-faded memory, plenty of you will have picked up a 360, or received one for Xmas. And now that you've lugged that heavy bugger home and/or out of the box, found a breezy place for the fat-boy power pack to sit and earned every platinum medal on *PGR3* – what next? Xbox Live, of course, 360's online community where you'll be able to natter with friends, download stuff and thrash strangers in deathmatches. Getting online isn't trivial but should be as painless as possible, which is why we're here to help…

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Aside from the console itself, naturally. And fingers! Lots of fingers. Hundreds…





GETTING XBOX 360 ONLINE

It's just plain tough luck if you live in an area that's currently not able to provide broadband access. Maybe take up canoeing instead? You'll also need either an Ethernet cable (free with 360 Premium pack) or Wireless adapter to connect your 360 to your PC or modem. An Ethernet slot looks like the network slot on the back of Xbox 360 – if your PC or modem doesn't have one, your Internet service provider is likely to be able to help out.

USING XBOX 360 ONLINE

A hard drive isn't essential, but memory units have so little space that you'll only be able to store the smallest of downloads on them. Game demos and most trailers are far larger than memory units, so you'll be needing a HDD if you're serious about milking all the possibilities of Live. A memory card is fine, though, if you just want to play against others, and store game saves. And of course, you'll need an Xbox Live account…

QUESTIONS?!

Q: Is it as simple as just plugging it in?
- As is often the case with videogame tech, yes and no. See the guide above.

Q: Do I have to do anything with my Xbox Live account?
- Once it's active, you don't have to use it, no. It'll just sit there, ready and waiting. Like a faithful dog! Or a stealthy murderer. But mostly a dog.

Q: What problems are common?
- A common trouble is getting past your PC, through firewalls or WiFi security measures. But these are solved through your PC, not the console.

Q: How much does Live cost?
- Silver membership is free. Gold is or £40 a year, or three months for £15.

Q: Do I have to have a credit card?
- Nope. You can buy Gold memberships from game shops, pre-paid cards that you can take home and use to activate your account.

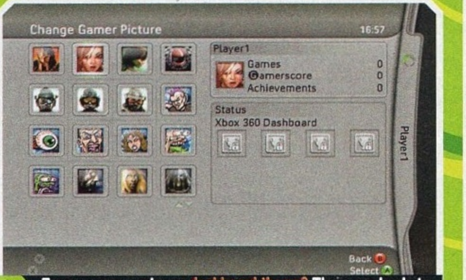
Q: Can I gamble online? Download porn, or maps to ancient treasures?
- Nope. Live is a lot different to the Internet. If you've got kids, you can fiddle with plenty of parental settings in 360's dashboard to stop them wandering about online and spending money.

KNOW YOUR 'PLACE

'Marketplace' is where you go to buy things over Xbox Live. It doesn't use money directly, though, but Marketplace points. These cost £17.50 for 2100 points, but you can buy them in smaller chunks than that. It might sound like a pain in the arse, but this means that MS can now sell you smaller items for a smaller price, instead of having to keep to the minimum price for credit card transactions. And with this system, you no longer need a credit card, as you can buy points from a game shop in the form of a voucher, which you can activate at home in order to get your goodies. Eventually, you'll be able to make and sell your own content – such as a custom paintjob for a racing game – in Marketplace, too. Bought content isn't refundable, mind.

Movie trailers are available, in both standard and high definition, and are completely free.

Also completely free are clips showing forthcoming games. Pretend to play them, if you want – we do sometimes.



Change Gamer Picture 16:57

Player1
Games 0
Gamerscore 0
Achievements 0

Status
Xbox 360 Dashboard

Fancy a new avatar or dashboard theme? There are loads to pick from, but you can't preview them, unfortunately.

The beautiful looking Live Arcade games are proving a bigger distraction than most full-blown launch titles.

30
MENU
HINT

You can download game demos, but they're *huge* and best left to complete overnight unless you have lots of patience.

STOBART'S SWORDPLAY

Teetering on the brink of death, the point and click adventure had to evolve or die a lingering death – but it may not be on the brink of extinction just yet. George and Nico's adventures in 2003's *Broken Sword: The Sleeping Dragon* proved that pixel hunting still had a place in gaming. Now Revolution has announced *Broken Sword: The Angel of Death*, in which poor old George becomes embroiled in a centuries-old conflict between religion and science. Question is, will it be 2D or 3D. We'll find out later in the year…

FUTURE'S BRIGHT FOR SONY

Two exciting new titles for Sony's handheld are looming on the horizon. First up is *Matrix: Path of Neo*, if recent job advertisements from developer Shiny are to be believed. Next comes EA's *Fight Night Round Three* – and it's the best boxing game we've played in years. *Round Three* is set to feature Arturo 'Thunder' Gotti, 'Irish' Micky Ward, Bernard Hopkins and Roy Jones Jr. Just how EA will port the game's famous two-stick punching system to the solo-sticked PSP is another question entirely... We look forward to seeing the results sometime this year.

EXTRA LIVE

The cream of the download crop to be had on Xbox Live Arcade…

BEJEWELLED 2

Price: 800 points (£6.67)
It's an enjoyable game that everyone knows, it looks good, and it's a decent distraction.

3/5

GEOMETRY WARS

Price: 400 points (£3.33)
Included as a demo in *PGR3*, this is sharp jolt of arcade goodness, done 360-style.

4/5

HEXIC

Price: Free; built into 360 hard drive
The new game from the brain behind *Tetris*. Tricky to get into, but supremely addictive.

4/5

MUTANT STORM: RELOADED

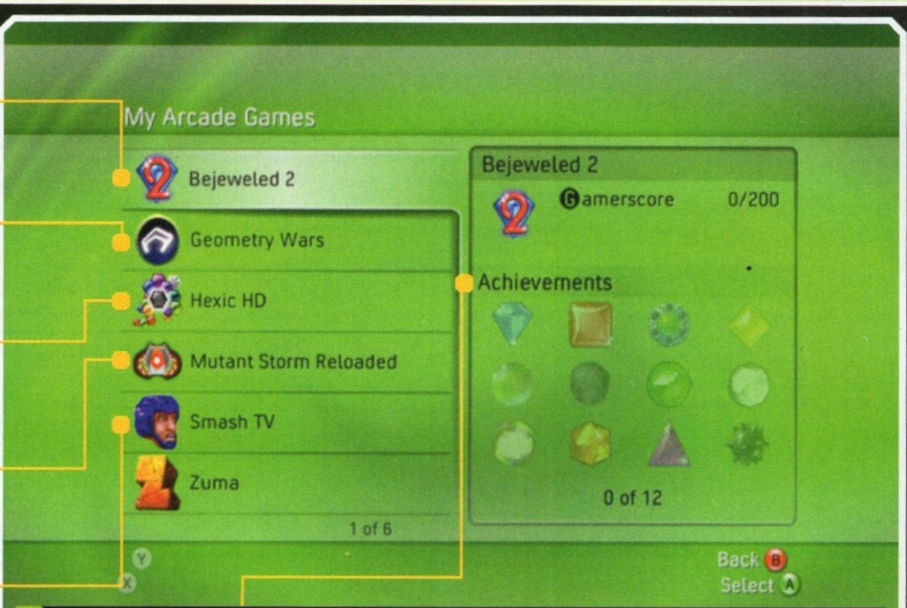
Price: 800 points (£6.67)
Better than *GW* in the long run, this offers 89 levels of increasing shoot 'em up chaos.

5/5

RETRO CLASSICS

Price: 400 points (£3.33) each
Only *Gauntlet*, *Smash TV* and *Joust* are available, but they play as well as ever.

4/5



Standard 360 games offer around 1000 points worth of Achievements that can be earned and added to your Gamerscore. Smaller Xbox Live Arcade games, though, only go up to around 200 points. They're still broken up into lots of little objectives and awards, all of which are explained and stored on this blade in the dashboard.

PRECIOUS METALS

Xbox Live membership comes in two flavours – Silver and Gold. Silver is free to anyone with a 360, and allows you to access downloadable content and send text messages to friends. Upgrade to Gold (£40 for a year), and you can play online, access exclusive downloads and setup chatrooms, provided you've got the Live headset (free with Xbox 360 Premium pack).

Here's *Tron* lady, our office gargoyle, sporting Live's headset. The rubbery bit can be adjusted for maximum shoutiness.

ALIVE & KICKING ARSE

What games are worth playing online at the moment? We should know – we've been playing them non-stop since the 360 dropped on our doorstep. Here's our selection of the best…

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 3

Project Gotham Racer 3 is the torch-bearer for Live among the launch games: it's not just about its online play (which has more than a handful of modes) but Gotham TV, a virtual channel that lets you watch the best players in the world, download their replays and upload your own.

KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER

A very beautiful but borderline bland adventure, its action comes to life with another person in tow thanks to the excellent coop mode. Whole stages can be replayed with a friend around to lend a hand, over Xbox Live, for high scores and giggles.

PERFECT DARK ZERO

Rare's flawed but detailed first-person shooter has two distinct types of Live play – Deathmatch and Co-op. Both are essential in elevating the game above its clumsy single-player campaign, especially the frantic and feature-filled Dark Ops missions.

FOUR SEASONS IN ONE GAME

As part of your online profile, you've got to choose a 'zone' that best sums up your play philosophy…

RECREATION

You just want to have fun, right? No pressure. Have a nice day!

FAMILY

How many swearwords do your kids know? None? Want to keep it that way?

PRO

This is for sportsmen who value good competition, but aren't sore losers i.e. no-one.

UNDERGROUND

Anything goes here, even… *talking about PS2!* Just kidding. Give each other hell.

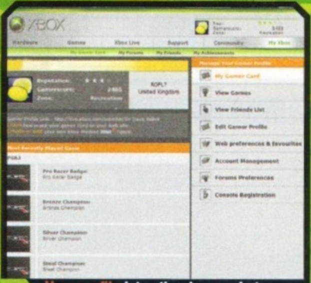
WEB SIGHTS

Your 360 experience doesn't end with the console itself – this is just the beginning of what could be a flourishing online gaming career.

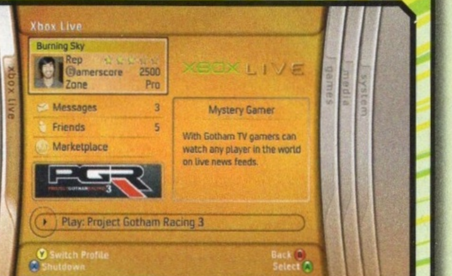
If you're active on Live, and have a competitive streak a mile wide, you should check out www.xbox.com. Once you're signed up to the service, you'll have access to all of your Xbox Live details via the site, including rundowns of what games you've played and when, exhaustive lists of in-game Achievements, active Friends lists and more. It soon becomes addictive stuff.

But while it is brilliant, but doesn't half feel like stalking sometimes, especially when you see that one of your friends has nothing to play but the *Kameo* demo and you feel a pang of pity/gloating.

Every game you play is tracked here, along with your Achievement points.



Your profile lets other know what you've been up to, or are doing.



With Gotham TV gamers can watch any player in the world on live news feeds.

Of course, if you want a completely detailed breakdown of what you've played and achieved, consult 360's dashboard.

HELS BELLS

Sony has snapped up developer Guerrilla Games to make *Killzone* PS3. Despite *Killzone* on PS2 failing to live up to the '*Halo*-killer' hype, Guerrilla's PS3 E3 showing has given the series a huge boost.

HALO ZERO

Master Chief stars in a fan-made PC-only release called *Halo Zero*. This is a non-commercial, labour of love and isn't affiliated with Bungie or Microsoft. It looks great, though. Surf on over to www.halozero.new.fr to grab the free download.

GAMESMASTER READER AWARDS 2005

It's your last chance to make a difference...

Our office mailbag is already full to bursting with your entries for *GM's* Best of Year Awards 2005, but if you haven't bothered yet – good news! – there's still some time left as the voting doesn't close until 31st January.

This really is your last chance to tell everyone what you *really* reckoned were your personal highs and lows of 2005, as well as get your mitts on a spanking new PSP! So with no further ado, it's onto the important bit – the voting...

GAME OF THE YEAR 2005

BEST PS2 GAME OF 2005

BEST XBOX GAME OF 2005

BEST CUBE GAME OF 2005

BEST PC GAME OF 2005

BEST DS GAME OF 2005

BEST PSP GAME OF 2005

BEST GBA GAME OF 2005

BEST PIECE OF HARDWARE 2005

BEST MULTI-PLAYER INSULT

BEST CHEAT/SECRET OF 2005

BEST GRAPHICS OF 2005

BEST IN-GAME MOVE OF 2005

HERO OF THE YEAR 2005

VILLAIN OF THE YEAR 2005

BIGGEST 'WOW' MOMENT OF 2005

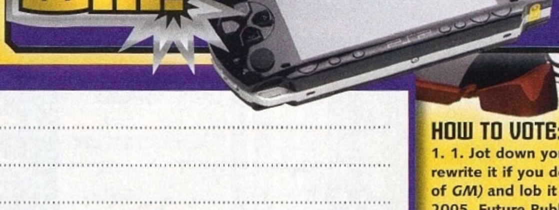
DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE YEAR

SOLID SNAKE AWARD FOR BAD HAIR

BEST ONLINE GAME OF 2005

SEXIEST GAME BABE/BLOKE OF 2005

MOST WANTED GAME OF 2006



Vote now – all entries will be entered into our compo to win a PSP!

YOUR DETAILS

NAME ....

AGE ....

ADDRESS ....

....

PHONE NUMBER .... EMAIL ....

HOW TO VOTE:

1. 1. Jot down your choices (or photocopy/rewrite it if you don't want to harm your copy of *GM*) and lob it in the post to GM Awards 2005, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.
2. Head your choices '*GM Awards 2005*' and email to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk

Closing date is 31/01/06. We thank you.

LITTLE GIRLS, BIG SCARES

Rule of Rose is a terrifying new horror game from Sony, destined for PS2 and released in early 2006. We've seen nothing but a trailer, but considering us suitably wigged out: scenes of creepy young ladies messing about with lipstick, dancing around in dusty ballrooms and generally behaving in a twisted manner not becoming of such well-dressed youngsters. What happened to kicking footballs around in fields while laughing innocently and dreaming of sweets, eh?

JAP 360 LAUNCH DELAY

Xbox 360 may have launched in Japan, but plenty of its games are still awaiting release. There have been delays aplenty to scupper 360's touchdown, not least *Dead or Alive 4* arriving very late in December . Intense battlefield brawler *Ninety-Nine Nights* and epic RPG *Enchant Arm* have both missed the launch window, instead hitting the launch wall and not arriving in Japan until spring 2006.

A vast set of Monster, Spell and Effect Cards lie at your disposal to duel with.

BOOGIE WITH YU-GI!

Battle online FREE courtesy of *GM*...

Chances are you'll be wondering what that whacking great CD-ROM bundled with your copy of *GM* is by now. *Yu-Gi-Oh Online* is the new sensation that's sweeping the net. Engage in *Yu-Gi-Oh* O.C.G. battles on your PC with other duelists from across the globe. In between battles, you can chat, and even trade cards with allies and rivals.

After installing *Yu-Gi-Oh!* from your free CD, follow the instructions on the screen to complete your registration. You'll receive an initial deck of cards to start playing with, after which you simply challenge any player waiting in the online lobby to a duel. It couldn't be simpler.

After your 10 games are up, it's time to get your wallet out as *Yu-Gi-Oh Online* is a pay per play service. Still, our CD should at least give you a taster of the oh-so-sweet duelling action.

To learn more about *Yu-Gi-Oh Online*, point your browsers towards www.yugioh-online.net/top/english-gb/index.html Happy battling!

Duels come alive thanks to the impressive cartoon-like special effects.

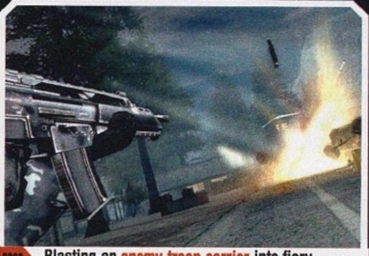
Reduce your opponent's life points to zero to gain a victory.

BLACK IS BACK!

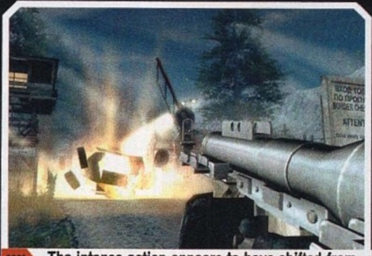
Mother of all FPSs heads to the Motherland...

In preparation for next month's definitive review, here's a bumper helping of the latest Ruski-blasting action from Criterion's uber-shooter *Black*. Not since *Halo 2* has a shooter been quite so anticipated by *GamesMaster*. The reason? We can't quite put our fingers on it.

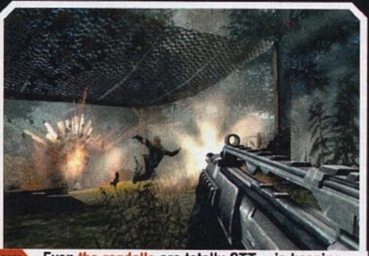
Maybe it's because it's being developed by the fellas behind *Burnout*, one of our all-time favourite racers, or maybe it's because it looks and sounds better than we ever possibly imagined a PS2 title could be. Maybe it's because it's *just so bloody violent*. Yep, that'll be it.



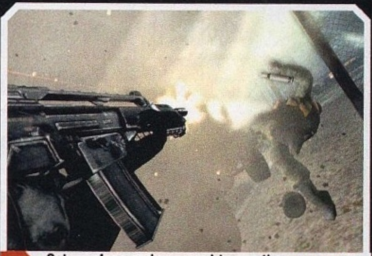
Blasting an enemy troop carrier into fiery oblivion with our shiny machine gun of doom.



The intense action appears to have shifted from city streets to the dark forests of Russia.



Even the ragdolls are totally OTT – in keeping with the visceral theme of the game.



Get up close and personal to see the awesome lighting and particle effects in action.

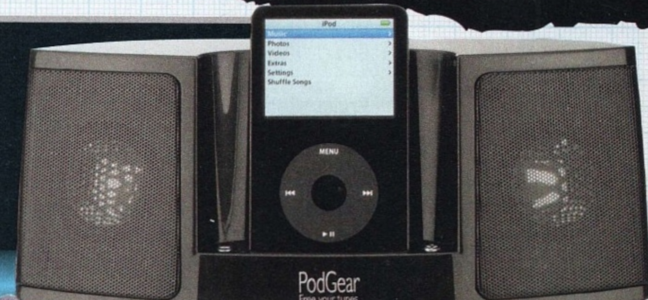
NEW STUFF

PODGEAR HOUSEPARTY

PodGear's ingenious HouseParty transforms your iPod into a miniature stereo. Designed for your iPod to snugly fit in between its curvy speakers, it's as much a fashion accessory for your living room, bedroom or study as a sound system. It'll even charge your iPod while it plays!

Available in either black or white and compatible with all 3rd, 4th and 5th generation iPods plus the Mini, Nano and Shuffle, this is a quality piece of kit at a reasonable price.

FROM: PodGear
CONTACT: www.podgear.net
PRICE: £49.99

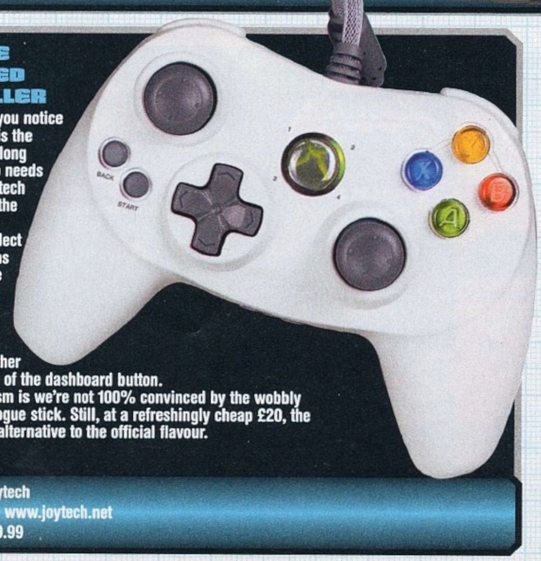


XBOX 360 DIGITAL VGA CABLE

Own an Xbox 360, a computer monitor with VGA output and lust after HD-style visuals without forking over £600+ for a pricy new LCD set? Then this brilliant gizmo is a must. The cable takes advantage of the high definition output of the Xbox 360, displaying 720p (Progressive), or 1080i (Interlaced) HD resolutions. It even comes bundled with a Digital Optical Cable, providing true 5.1 digital surround sound.

FROM: Joytech
CONTACT: www.joytech.net
PRICE: £14.99

NEO SE ADVANCED CONTROLLER



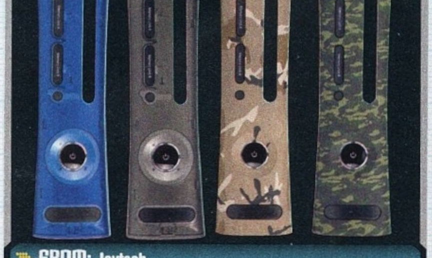
The first thing you notice about this pad is the monstrous 9-ft long cable (hey, who needs wireless?). Joytech has also taken the bold step of plonking the select and start buttons to the left of the D-pad (which feels a lot more solid than the official's rather spongy one) rather than either side of the dashboard button.

Our only criticism is we're not 100% convinced by the wobbly feel of the analogue stick. Still, at a refreshingly cheap £20, the SE is a worthy alternative to the official flavour.

FROM: Joytech
CONTACT: www.joytech.net
PRICE: £19.99

TWIN FACEPLATE PACK (BLUE AND CHARCOAL/CAMOUFLAGE)

If your feel your Xbox 360 is lacking in the looks department, spice things up a bit with a makeover. This twin pack is officially licensed, but whereas the official Microsoft ones weigh in at a hefty £15 each, you'll get two for the price of one if you opt for Joytech. Bargain!



FROM: Joytech
CONTACT: www.joytech.net
PRICE: £14.99

100% NEW!

DRAC DUO

Konami is ramping up the *Castlevania* nostalgia on GBA by releasing a *Harmony of Dissonance/Aria of Sorrow* double pack. Both were helmed by the renowned Koji Igarashi and feature some of the finest platforming in *GM's* recent memory. 2006 should be a good year for bloodsuckers.

GET UP!

Marc Ecko's graffiti game is already set to receive the full movie treatment courtesy of MTV films. Described as "an incredibly cool and different title", the adaptation promises to be a "homage to graffiti's rich culture". And us? We just want to play the game!

UK Top 20 Games Chart

Need For Speed burns into the pole position while *Harry Potter* holds off both *King Kong* and *50 Cent*!

GM uses the ChartTrack chart – the only chart officially recognised by the UK software industry. Get the full 20 in *GM* every month!

ChartTrack

IT'S THE ONLY CHART THAT COUNTS!

NO.		PREVIOUS POSITIONS Last week	PREVIOUS POSITIONS 2 weeks ago	PREVIOUS POSITIONS 3 weeks ago	GAME	PUBLISHER	GM'S SCORE	GM JUDGEMENTS	
1	=	1	-	-	Need For Speed: Most Wanted PS2 XBOX CUBE PC 360	EA	82%	*Need For Speed Most Wanted* is a cracking flashy all-round urban racer/car modder.	
2	=	2	4	5	Pro Evolution Soccer 5 PS2 XBOX PC GOLD AWARD	Konami	96%	Takes the beautiful game to a whole new level of evolution. Just champion.	
3	▲	4	5	3	FIFA 06 PS2 XBOX CUBE PC PSP DS GBA	EA	69%	Predictable, dull and more laboured than Thomas Brolin's breathing. We've finally lost patience.	
4	▼	3	1	6	HP & the Goblet of Fire PS2 XBOX CUBE PC PSP	EA	69%	Dazzles like expensive fireworks, but the wizardly wonders splutter out all too quickly.	
5	=	5	-	-	50 Cent: Bulletproof PS2 XBOX	Vivendi	46%	A cynical game that's distressing and joyless to play. Just buy 50 Cent's music instead.	
6	▲	9	12	-	Call Of Duty 2: Big Red One PS2 XBOX CUBE	Activision	84%	The tightest and toughest *Call Of Duty* yet. No big surprises but what a lovely war.	
7	▼	6	2	2	Star Wars: Battlefront 2 PS2 XBOX PC PSP	EA	81%	Another satisfying stomp (and soar) around the stars, but best for modem owners.	
8	▲	12	14	-	King Kong PS2 XBOX CUBE PC PSP DS GBA 360	Ubisoft	70%	Big, hairy, scary - but basically one level stretched out over 40. Dis-ape-ointng.	
9	▲	10	10	4	Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories PSP GOLD AWARD	Rockstar	90%	The best game on PSP, but WiFi aside it could only ever be a shuffle sideways for the series.	
10	▼	7	3	1	WWE SmackDown! Vs RAW 2006 PS2 PSP	THQ	82%	Almost exactly like real wrestling – whether that's a good or a bad thing is up to you.	
11	▲	36	32	18	Call Of Duty 2 PC 360 GOLD AWARD	Activision	92%	Bayoneting its rivals into gory submission, *Call of Duty 2* is a game you really need to play.	
12	NEW	-	-	-	Perfect Dark Zero 360	Microsoft	85%	Becomes better the more time you spend on it, but has too many foibles to make it essential.	
13	▼	11	8	7	The Sims 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE PC PSP DS GBA	EA	72%	Not the step up on the consoles as it was on the PC – overall, a bit disappointing.	
14	▲	30	-	-	The Chronicles Of Narnia PS2 XBOX CUBE PC PSP	Buena Vista	73%	LOTR clone that's a bit like an ice sculpture: solid and pretty, but doesn't last long.	
15	▼	14	9	14	Gun PS2 XBOX CUBE PC 360	Activision	77%	An exhilarating ride that trots between brilliant gun battles and a dated format.	
16	NEW	-	-	-	Project Gotham Racing 3 360 GOLD AWARD	Microsoft	94%	Still in a world-beating class of its own, and an excellent start for driving games on 360.	
17	▲	20	-	-	True Crime: New York City PS2 XBOX CUBE PC	Activision	72%	A big story, but at its core nasty pop-up and slow play allow others to pip it.	
18	▼	15	25	-	Shadow the Hedgehog PS2 XBOX CUBE	Sega	65%	Very little bang for your buck. Sonic really is a shadow of its former self.	
19	▼	16	19	-	From Russia With Love PS2 XBOX CUBE	EA	62%	Look beneath the 007 sheen, and all you'll find is a shallow, one dimensional game.	
20	▲	23	29	19	Crash Tag Team Racing PS2 XBOX CUBE PSP DS	Vivendi	57%	Dire platforming and tediously dull racing – together at last! Car crash gaming.	

Software charts compiled by ChartTrack, ©2005 ELSPA (UK) Ltd. www.elspa.com Words: Dave Harrison

01 NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED

It's been one of the biggest selling games of the year, ever since EA's street racing game took dispensed with its ocean drive, convertible experience and went for hip underground, modding vibe instead. Now with the police pursuits returning, as well as sporting a new cool autumny look, means it is just as popular as its ever been. And being out on every console available does wonders for sales as well.

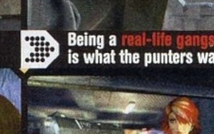
Fast cars and EA – a recipe for success.

Pimp your ride then go for a drive in the mean streets.

05 50 CENT: BULLETPROOF

It's not a game we'd recommend, but here's proof that whatever the standard of the game, if you get the right licence it will sell. 50 Cent is, of course, the biggest star in hip-hop and has been taking every opportunity to plug the game. He see the videogames as an essential part of his merchandise – well, he would at £40 a pop. So look as this as a brand extension and not as an attempt to bring anything new to gaming.

Fun for all the family according to Fiddy.



Being a real-life gangsta is what the punters want.

12 PERFECT DARK ZERO

The 360 has two format exclusive games in the top 20, *Perfect Dark Zero* at 12 and *Project Gotham Racing 3* at 16. While some might have expected more, it's not a bad result seeing that there's only a limit amount of Microsoft's new console around. The release of the 360 could have also contributed to the sales performances of *Call Of Duty 2* and *Need for Speed: Most Wanted.*

Ms Dark strikes a pose before going shooting.

Dodge this. She's lovely but she's lethal, too.

JAPAN CHARTS

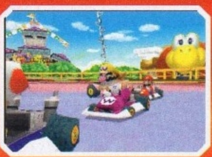
Soul Calibur makes a strong return with its third sequel.

1 Animal Crossing: Wild World DS
2 Naruto: Gekitou Ninja Taisen 4 CUBE
3 Rockman EXE 6: Dennoujuu Grega GBA
4 Soul Calibur 3 PS2
5 Ratchet & Clank 4th: GiriGiri Gigna no Giga Battle PS2
6 Rockman EXE 6: Dennoujuu Faltzer GBA
7 Pokémon Fushigi na Dungeon: Aka no Kyuujoutai DS
8 Ikusa Gami PS2
9 Mobile Suit Gundam SEED: Rengou vs Z.A.F.T. PS2
10 J.League Winning Eleven 9 Asia Championship PS2

US CHARTS

PC strategy sims *Age of Empires* and *Civilisation* perform well.

1 Age Of Empires 3 PC
2 Mario Party 7 CUBE
3 Madden NFL 2006 PS2
4 Star Wars Battlefront 2 PS2 XBOX PC
5 Mario Kart DS
6 Civilisation 4 PC
7 NIntendogs DS
8 World of Warcraft PC
9 DS Mario and Luigi: Partners in Time DS
10 Animal Crossing: Wild World DS



BT BALLS UP

Ninty's UK WiFi service was full of good intentions when it launched. Alas, *GM* readers are reporting problems – chiefly involving British Telecom's numerous Openzone hotspots. Despite confidently assuring gamers all their wireless service would be compatible with Nintendo's DS handheld, this isn't exactly true. Summing the situation up as "unforeseen technical issues", BT has resolved to remedy the situation "as soon as possible".

RACE RELATIONS

OutRun returned from almost two decades of self-imposed exile to earn 78% back in *GM*152, and now Sega's classic checkpoint racer is back once again in the form of *OutRun 2006: Coast 2 Coast*. A compilation of sorts, this PS2, PSP and PC release features 12 licensed Ferraris, 30 tracks ripped from *OutRun2* plus the arcade game *OutRun2 SP*. With a revised mission structure, licence mode and 1-6 players online, it's looking wheelie good.

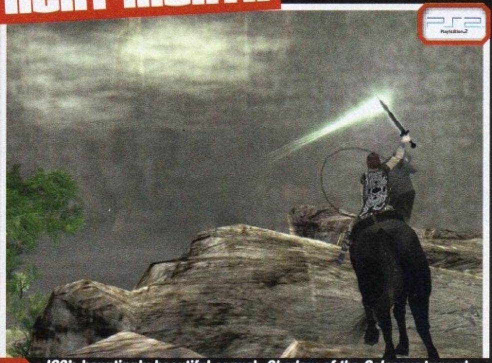
WATCH OUT FOR...

Look out for these latest games to hit the shelves...

THIS MONTH

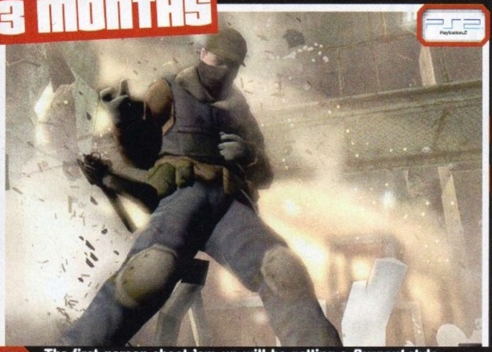
It might not have the depth of *Project Gotham* but Ridge Racer 6 is a cheek flappingly fast, 360 based assault on the eyes.

NEXT MONTH



ICO's hauntingly beautiful sequel, *Shadow of the Colossus* tugged on GamesMaster's heartstrings again this month (see page 54).

3 MONTHS



The first-person shoot-'em-up will be getting a *Burnout* style revamp in the form of Criterion's *Black*.

THE FUTURE

It's a first-person shooter with a time travelling twist – *Timeshift* will be coming to an Xbox 360 sometime this year.

Cut it out and stick it on the wall

COMING SOON

JANUARY

13TH	Ridge Racer 6	360	Namco
13TH	Final Fight: Streetwise	PS2 XBOX	Capcom
24TH	Test Drive Unlimited	360	Atari
24TH	SPECNAZ: Project Wolf	PC	GMX
27TH	Rise of Nations – Rise of Legends	PC	Microsoft
27TH	Samurai Showdown 5	PS2	Ignition
27TH	Football Generation	PS2	Midas
27TH	Great Invasions	PC	Digital Jesters
27TH	SOCOM 3	PS2	Sony
27TH	Rainbow Six 4 – Lockdown	PC	Ubisoft
27TH	Arcade Classics Vol 1 – Play It	PSP	TBC
27TH	Armoured Core: Nexus	PS2	Digital Jesters
27TH	Echo Night Beyond	PS2	Digital Jesters
27TH	Phoenix Wright Ace Attorney	DS	Capcom
27TH	The Roots	PC	Ascaron
27TH	Megaman Battle Network 5: Double Team	GBA	Capcom
27TH	Tales of Eternia	PSP	Ubisoft
27TH	Aquanox – Angel Tears	XBOX	JoWood
27TH	Star Wars: Episode 3 – Revenge of the Sith	PSP	Ubisoft
27TH	Midway Arcade Treasures	PSP	Midway
27TH	We Love Katamari	PS2	EA
27TH	Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time	DS	Nintendo

FEBRUARY

3RD	Pac-Man World 3	XBOX CUBE	Outsource
3RD	Namco Arcade 50th Anniversary	XBOX CUBE	Namco
3RD	Urban Reign	PS2	Sony
10TH	Disney's Chicken Little	PS2 XBOX PC CUBE GBA	TBC
10TH	Heart of Empire: Rome	PC	Deep Silver
17TH	Panzer Elite Action	PS2 XBOX	JoWood
24TH	Animal Crossing	DS	Nintendo
24TH	Marc Ecko's Getting Up – Contents Under Pressure	PS2 XBOX PC	Atari
10TH	Ghost Wars	PC	HIP Interactive
10TH	Pacific Storm	PC	Buka
10TH	Tycoon City: New York	PC	Atari
10TH	Shadow of the Colossus	PS2	Sony
10TH	Rise & Fall: Civilisations At War	PC	Midway
10TH	Dead or Alive 4	360	Tecmo
10TH	Final Fantasy 12	PS2	Square Enix
27TH	Super Princess Peach	DS	Nintendo
TBC	Paradise	PC	Ubisoft

MARCH

1ST	Zero Tolerance – City Under Fire	XBOX	Eidos
1ST	Full Spectrum Warrior 2: Ten Hammers	PS2 XBOX PC	THQ
1ST	Commandos Strike Force	XBOX PC	Eidos
1ST	City of the Dead	XBOX PC	TBC
3RD	Black	PS2	EA
24TH	The Elder Scrolls 4: Oblivion	PC 360	2K Games
24TH	Infected	PSP	Majesco
24TH	Battlestations: Midway	PS2 XBOX PC	Gizmondo
31ST	Fear & Respect	PS2 XBOX	Midway
31ST	Armoured Core: Formula Front – Special Edition	PSP	Agetec
31ST	Custom Robo GX	GBA	Nintendo

TO BE CONFIRMED

TBC	Disney's The Wild	GBA DS	TBC
TBC	24: The Game	PS2	Sony
TBC	25 to Life	PS2 XBOX	Eidos
TBC	Alan Wake	PC 360	Remedy
TBC	Bully	PS2 XBOX	Rockstar
TBC	Dead Rising	360	Capcom
TBC	Gears of War	360	Microsoft
TBC	Half Life 2: Aftermath	PC	EA
TBC	Hellgate: London	PC	Namco
TBC	Hitman: Blood Money	PS2 XBOX PC	Eidos
TBC	Ninety-Nine Nights	360	Microsoft
TBC	Prey PC,	360	2K Games
TBC	S.T.A.L.K.E.R. Shadow of Chernobyl	PC	THQ
TBC	Scarface	PS2 XBOX 360	Vivendi
TBC	Gothic 3	PC	JoWood
TBC	Timeshift	360	Atari
TBC	Tomb Raider: Legend	PS2 XBOX PC	Eidos
TBC	Championship Manager 2006	PC	THQ
TBC	Forbidden Siren 2	PS2	Sony
TBC	Maelstrom	PC	THQ
TBC	State Of Emergency 2	PS2	Playlogic
TBC	The Godfather	PS2 XBOX PC	EA

Heed Our Warning:
Here at *GM* we endeavour to bring you the most accurate release dates around. But the games industry is a fickle beast so bear in mind that the info above is constantly on the move. If it doesn't come out when we say it does, blame someone else!

- OUT: 24TH FEBRUARY
- FORMAT: PS2
- PRICE: £39.99
- DEVELOPER: EA
- PUBLISHER: EA
- ONLINE: NO
- OTHER FORMATS: XB, XB 360, PC, PSP
- WEB: WWW.EA.COM
- PLAYERS: 1

Join the Mafia without going through the blood-smearing initiation, go back to the 1940s without having to build a time machine – and see Marlon Brando without having to dig up his grave.

18

UPDATE!

» THE FIRST HANDS-ON WITH THE GODFATHER

THE GODFATHER

Grand Theft Auto gets mobbed? Now you're just being Sicily...

So you're aiming for a promotion. Normally that would mean working hard and meeting the objectives as agreed in your annual performance review.

Unsurprisingly, in *The Godfather* your objectives are more about smashing people's heads against gravestones and taking a baseball bat to a butcher than developing your interpersonal skills.

GOOD GOD

We've been climbing the Cosa Nostra career ladder in a playable version of *The Godfather* this month, and reassuring ourselves that "it's only business". Because this free-roaming mob marathon is, if anything, even more violent than *GTA*. Pedestrians spray blood like slapped mosquitoes when they're run over, cars go up like petrol stations, and fist-to-fist combat usually ends with your Mafia footsoldier snapping a neck, or shooting a forehead from point-blank range. It's an 18, alright.

Otherwise, it's business as usual. Mob life is complex, with skills to level up, turfs to protect, and a cityful of business owners to 'coerce'. But your aspirational gangster is basically a non-sweary CJ in a suit – stealing rides (or 'cars', as they were called back in the '40s) and packing heat ('carrying guns') through missions with *GTA* scrawled all over them.

EA's talk of 'consequences' for your actions now looks a bit empty – the only real decision to be made is whether you'll punch someone in the back until they die, or just until their internal organs squeal for mercy. Even if *The Godfather* apes *GTA* right down to the way drivers slam on the gas if you machinegun their chassis, at least it means it ticks all the right boxes. Bribe a nearby police officer, nab yourself a decent car – we recommend the nippy Cadillac – and you'll enjoy terrorising this living, breathing New York City of 60-odd years ago.

FATHER FIGURE

But the pleasure in taking in the vintage ambience is short-lived. Yes, it makes a refreshing change, but without the excitement of motorbikes, Uzis, proper cop chases and all-out gang wars, can the old-fashioned mafia really take on blinged-up SMG-toters with shaven chests? You do the maf. GM

Need to know

What is it?

Based on the masterpiece movies, it's a free-roamer with gangsters.

Facts

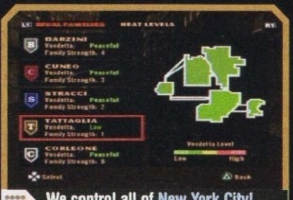
- **A decent chunk of '40s New York City – and it's alive!**
- **Steal any car, beat up any civilian, punch any dustbin**

Rumour

Marlon Brando's voice may be used.

From the people who made...

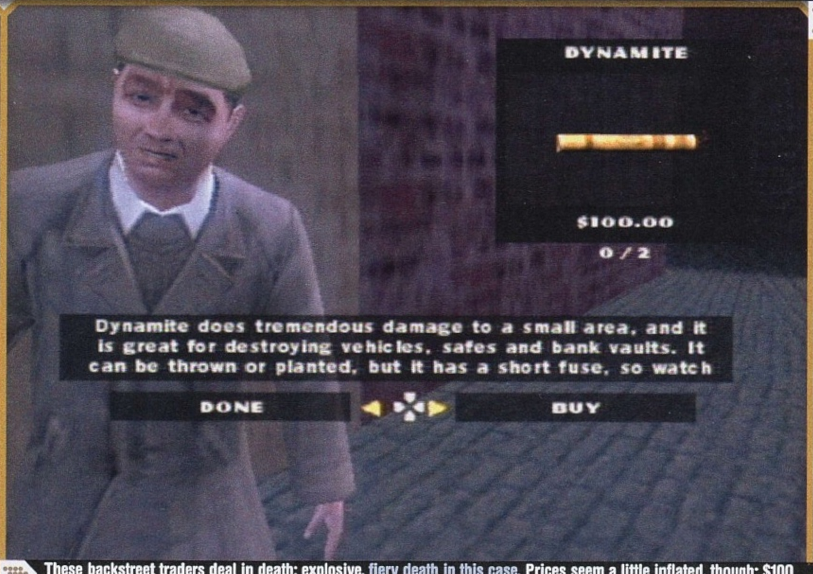
The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age 75%



We control all of New York City! We're even better than Brando.

There's nothing to stop you punching people in church. Fun.

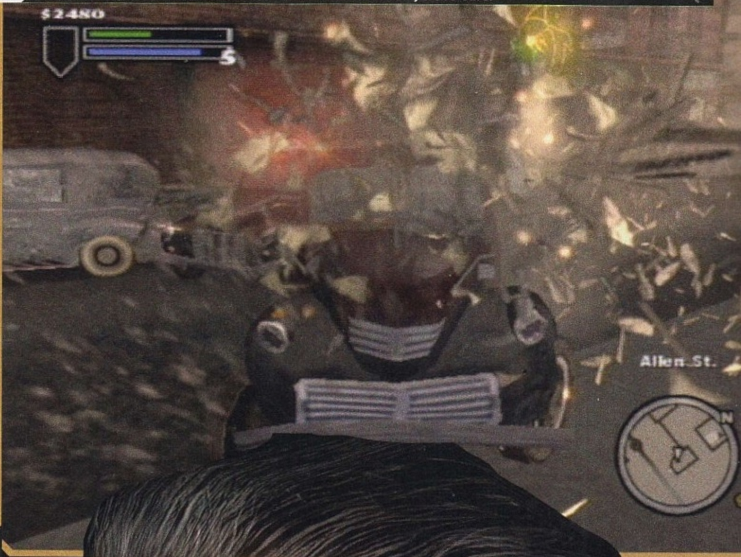
"THIS FREE-ROAMING MOB MARATHON IS EVEN MORE VIOLENT THAN GRAND THEFT AUTO"

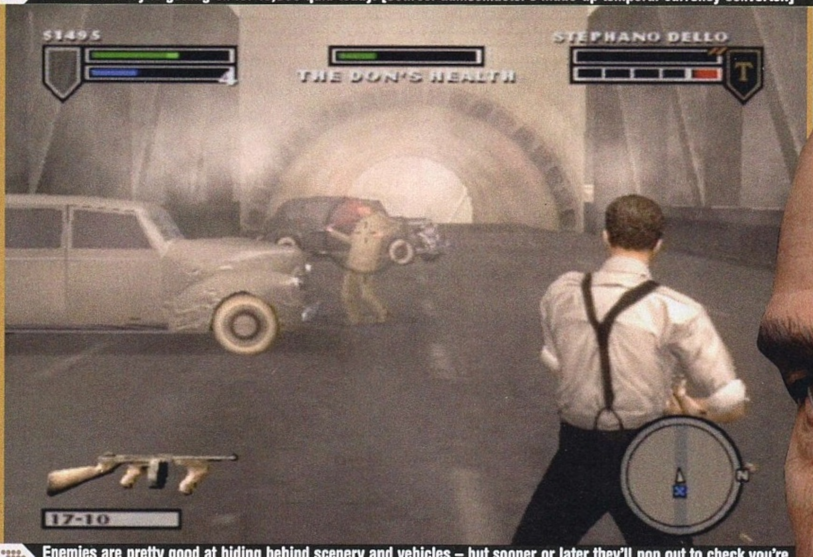

DYNAMITE
$100.00
0 / 2
DONE
BUY

Dynamite does tremendous damage to a small area, and it is great for destroying vehicles, safes and bank vaults. It can be thrown or planted, but it has a short fuse, so watch

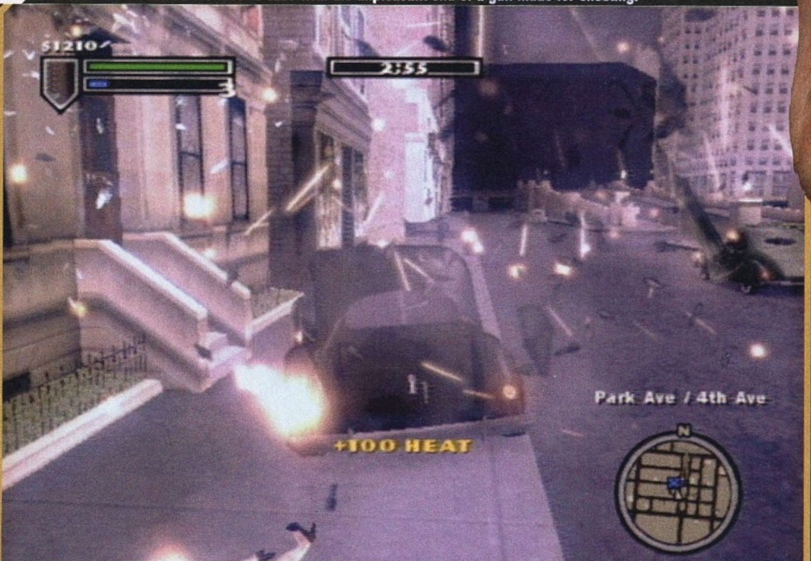
These backstreet traders deal in death: explosive, fiery death in this case. Prices seem a little inflated, though: $100 in 1940s money is getting on for 10,000 quid today. [Source: *GamesMaster's* made-up temporal currency converter.]

You can't help barging through every box in sight when you realise how pretty wooden confetti looks. This is what life in the mafia was all about, we're sure.

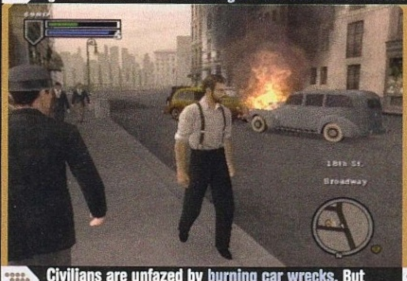

$2480
5
Allen St.


$1495
4
THE DON'S HEALTH
STEPHANO DELLO
T
17-10
N

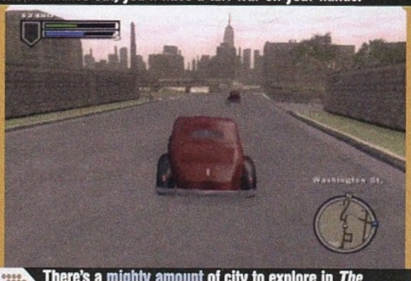
Enemies are pretty good at hiding behind scenery and vehicles – but sooner or later they'll pop out to check you're there. And find themselves face-to-face with the unpleasant end of a gun made for shooting.


$1210
3
2:55
Park Ave / 4th Ave
+100 HEAT
N

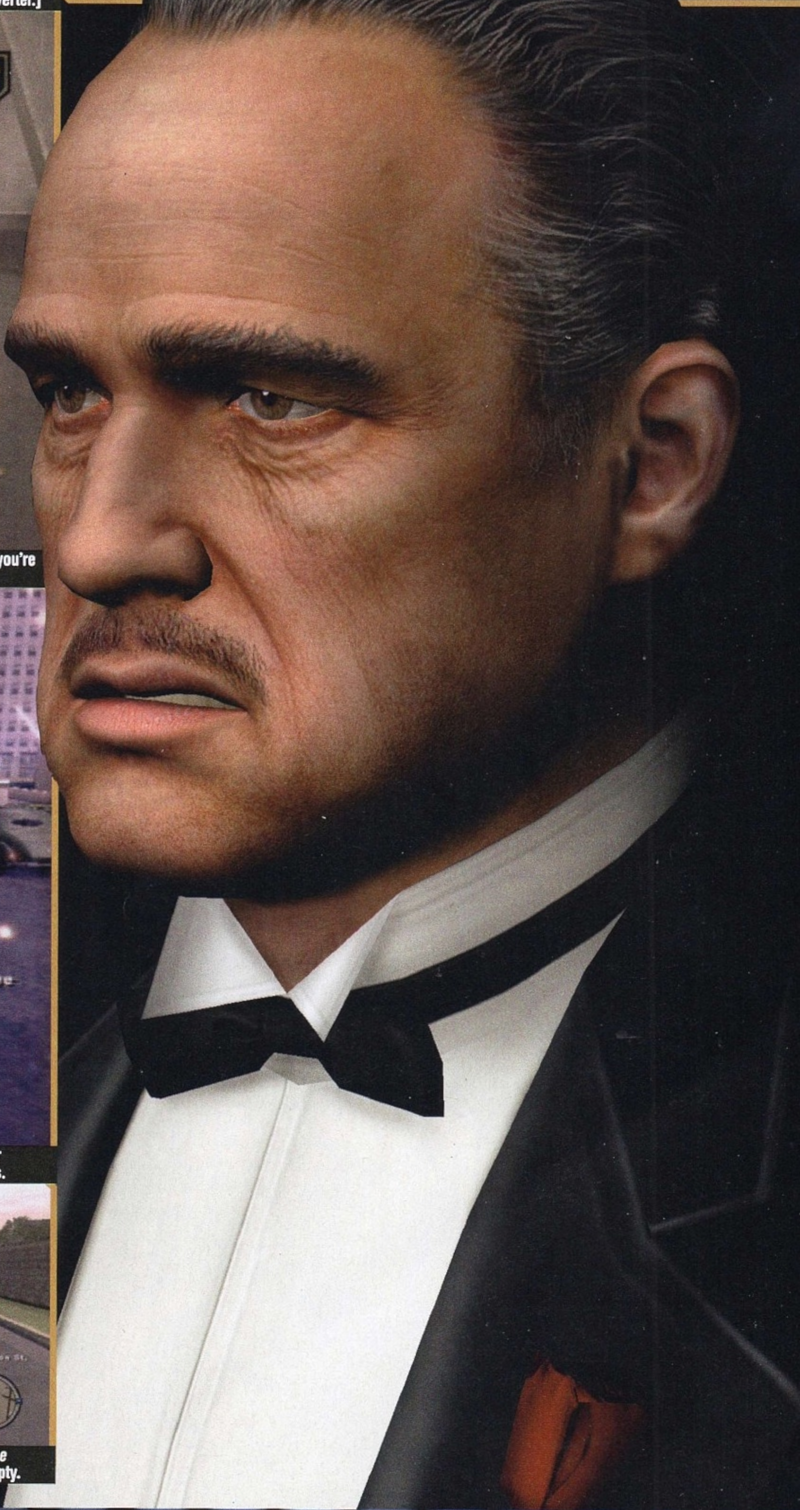
The more damage you cause – whether to the property of people (spot the telltale high heels at the bottom) or general destruction – the higher the 'heat' level rises. When it maxes out, you'll have a turf war on your hands.


18th St.
Broadway

Civilians are unfazed by burning car wrecks. But when vehicles *explode*, you should see them run.

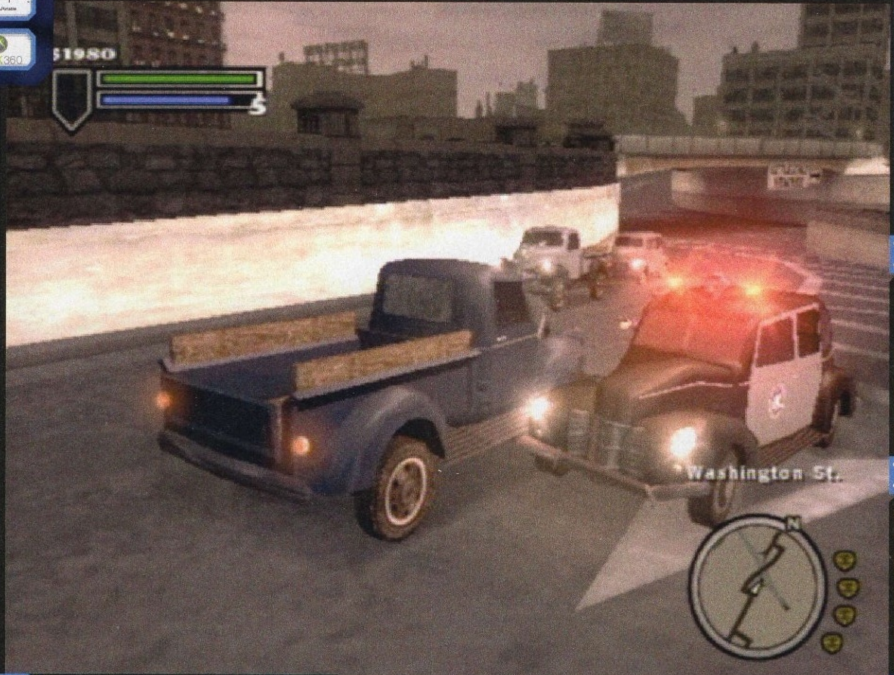

Washington St.

There's a mighty amount of city to explore in *The Godfather* – just a shame so much of it is so empty.

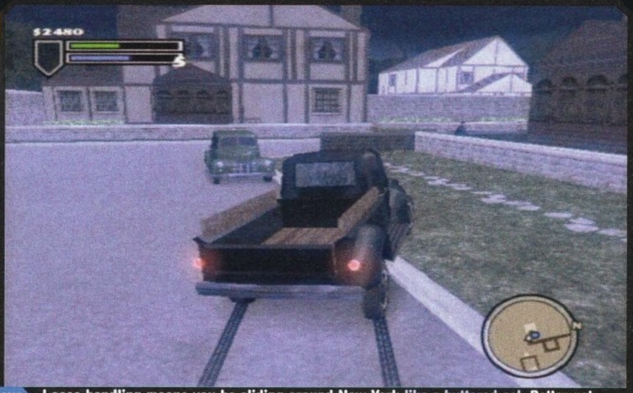


IT'S A STEAL

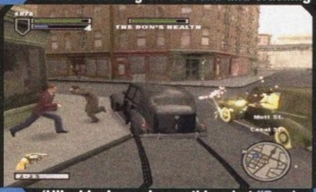
Unlike the slick rides of *Grand Theft Auto*, there's something very odd about jacking bulky Fords and rickety old delivery trucks – was stealing even invented in the 1940s? At least drivers from the olden days know how to react to a hostile vehicular takeover –i.e. run away at speed, preferably while screaming and waving their arms like muppets.



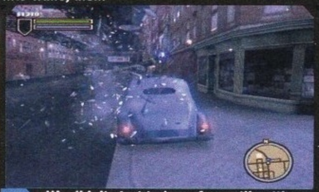
Cops aren't so good at chasing or killing, but their lights do make you squint a bit.



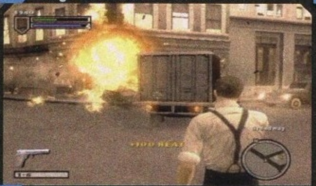
Loose handling means you be sliding around New York like a buttered eel. Better get used to veering off the road and crashing into walls, then.



'Hijacking' cars is one thing, but "Road Rage Execution"? Come now.



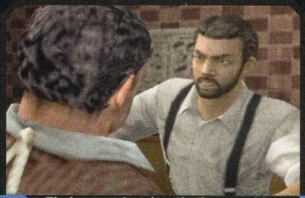
We didn't start to have fun until getting our hands on one of these beauts.



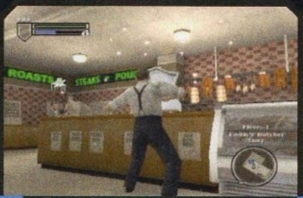
1940s cars were obviously 95% superflammable back in the day.

EXPECT RESPECT

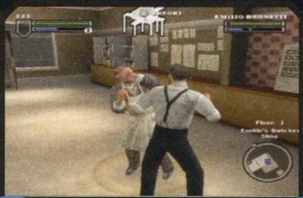
Unlike CJ, it's best if your mobster doesn't simply bash skulls until his fist needs hospital treatment. Keep beatings low-key, and 'business' will thrive...



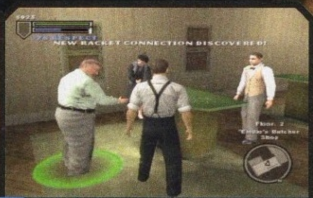
Find, say, a butcher that's owned by another mob. Now get your fists out.



To put the scares up, you can 'rearrange' the owner's face.



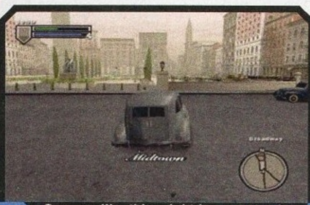
Make it short and sweet and they'll relent. Now cream off their profits.



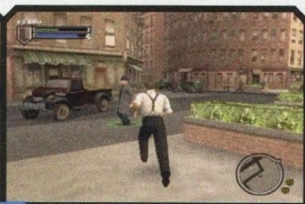
Plus, backdoors will open to shady gambling dens. Result: more greens.

NY-SEE

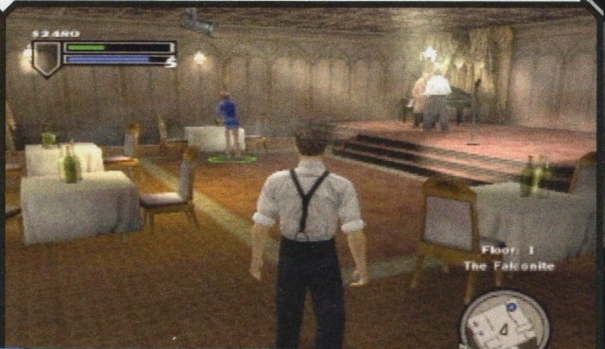
The Big Apple circa 1950 would be an easy place to get lost in– but *The Godfather's* map handily opens up in stages, so a new area will only be unlocked when you've got a job that'll take you there. The city's a bit murky, and distant skyscrapers pop out of nowhere (something EA will hopefully fix for the final version), but it's a looker all the same, smothered in middle-of-the-century ambience and busy with pedestrians who cross roads without looking one way, let alone both. And even if the layout of your average US city – all right-angled roads, bridges and underpasses – is getting overfamiliar, *The Godfather* has one impressive advantage over the likes of *GTA:* no mid-map loading times. That's a whole city streaming seamlessly off the disc, and the ability to open a door and step right into some admirably complex buildings without a Rockstar-style fade to 'Loading' pause. EA, we salute you.



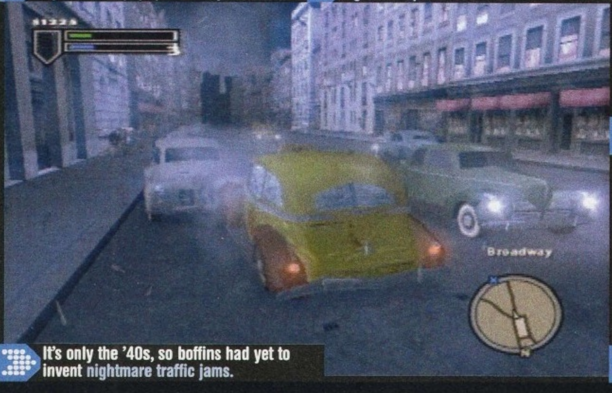
Squares like this might be easy on the eye, but the popup certainly ain't.



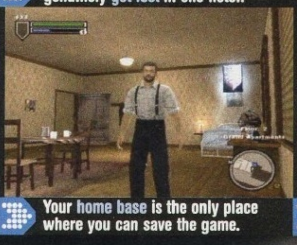
Got room in your brain for another game map? We've had to ditch Bath.



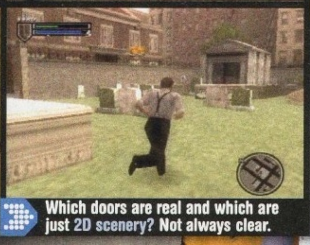
Interiors are so big and complex, we genuinely got lost in one hotel.



It's only the '40s, so boffins had yet to invent nightmare traffic jams.



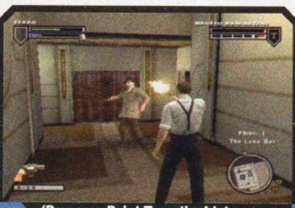
Your home base is the only place where you can save the game.

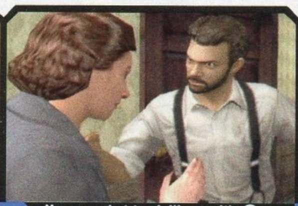


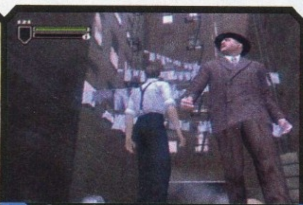
Which doors are real and which are just 2D scenery? Not always clear.

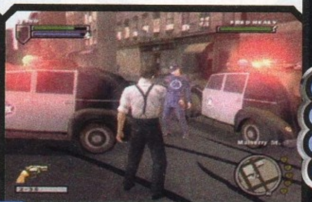
MOB RULE

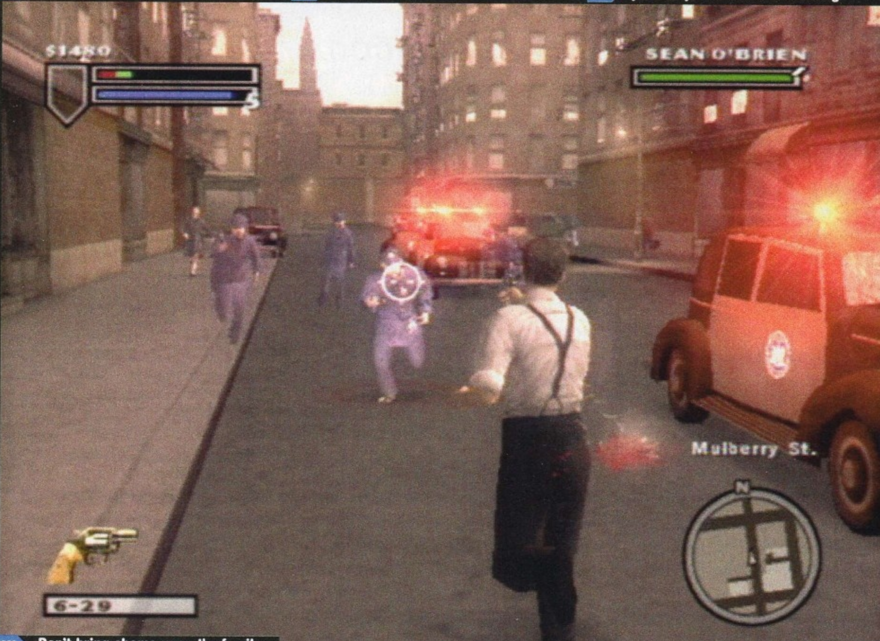
Turns out that there's much more to Mafia life than fitting enemies for cement shoes and milking the stereotypical Italian-American accent dry. With little more than a pistol and your fists and feet (which, in a very bad move by EA, are controlled by waggling the analogue sticks), your reign of terror in Little Italy knows no bounds. Only the cops can stop you, and they take cash, cheque or credit card.


'Pressure Point Targeting' lets you aim for shoulders and knees.

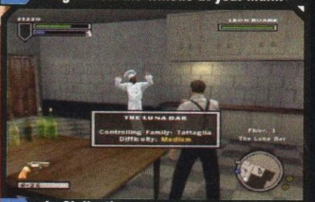

You can chat to civilians with Ⓨ, before you cut and bruise them.

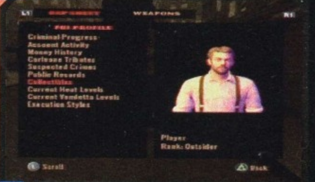

Get on foot and the map zooms in – just the job for shortcut-hunting.

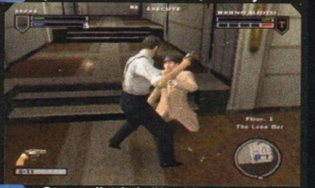

Watch the 'wanted meter' – a cop might blow his whistle at you. Mum!



Don't bring shame upon the family by running people over. Gun 'em.

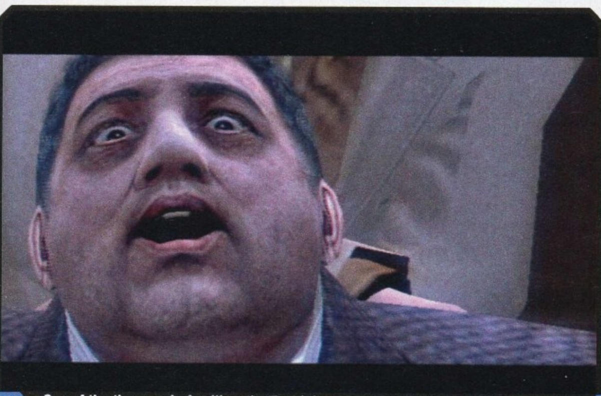

In Sicily, they say women are more deadly than shotguns. They're wrong.

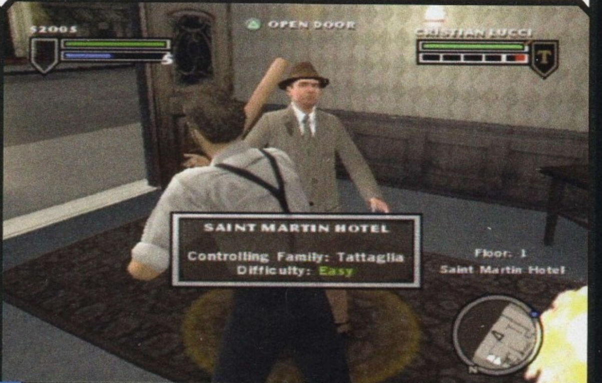

Completed missions earn you skill points. Distribute at will, RPG-style.


Once a district's 'Heat' level gets too high, it's mafia war. With guns!

FAMILY FORTUNES

There's a mafia-ised version of *San Andreas's* gang system at the heart of *The Godfather*. 'Ownership' of NYC's five districts seesaws between you and three other families, and only by threatening business owners can you claim the city.

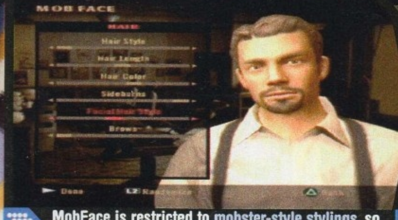

One of the three main families, the Barzinis, are behind the early death of your mentor, Luca Brasi. Single them out for 'special' 'treatment'.



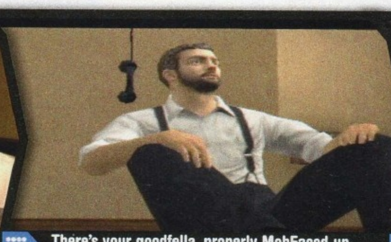
Businesses are rated according to how tough they are to take over. 'Hard' buildings have family members on guard duty.

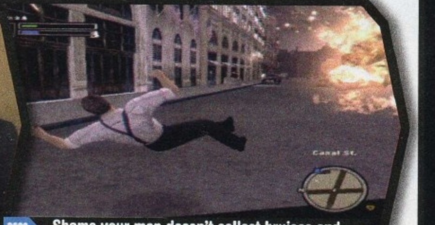
FACE IT

Despite the ridiculous name EA have given their face-creating ability – 'MobFace', really – it's genuinely impressive stuff. The level of detail that you've got over your mobster's mush is incredible (similar to EA's own *Tiger Woods*), and every hair, cheekbone and mole carries over to the cutscenes. The face technology as a whole is a stunner: some of the characters in our version had a bad case of rabbit-mouth when they spoke, but we've rarely seen faces so convincing. Everything from chin to eyebrow acts out the emotions, and original *Godfather* actors James Caan and Robert Duvall do EA's golden chequebook proud.



MobFace is restricted to mobster-style stylings, so a mohawk and '70s handlebar moustache?


There's your goodfella, properly MobFaced up. Who needs next-gen with face detail like this?



Shame your man doesn't collect bruises and cuts – although he does bleed like a real man.

PREVIEWER: Mark

HANDS ON VERDICT

The Godfather

HOW FINISHED? 70%

CONTROLS

⊗ Accelerate vehicle
○ Crouch
□ Brake vehicle
△ Talk / threaten / jack
L1 Auto-aim
R1 Shoot / Grab (with L1)
L2 Free aim

WE PLAYED IT IN...

GM's very own 'games area'.

WHAT WE PLAYED

- ☑ Pistol-cracking '40s shootouts
- ☑ Car rides against the clock
- ☑ Punch-happy scraps

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

More like a 1940s *San Andreas* than ever. *The Godfather* is sizeable and slick in places, but after all that EA hype about 'respect' and 'Blackhand', it's surprising to be faced with a cut-down, antique-era free roamer with not much new to uphold its family's honour.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Even *GTA's* peskiest problems – camera nightmares and clunky gun-wielding – have been 'borrowed'.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Finding the blackmarket trader who'll furnish you with TNT – and causing explosions that make *GTA* look tame.

VERDICT

5
4
3
2
1

GM LOVES

+ Wearing a mobster's smart shoes
+ Big, atmospheric city

GM HATES

- Shooting sucks
- Repetitive fisticuffs
- Over-twitchy car

MOST WANTED METER

Clawing frantically at the back axle of the turbo-charging *Grand Theft Auto* bandwagon, this currently has little over *True Crime* or *Mafia*.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: .... GTA: San Andreas, 98%
BIGGEST RIVAL: .... True Crime New York City, 72%

- **OUT:** FEBRUARY
- **FORMAT:** XB 360
- **PRICE:** £49.99
- **DEVELOPER:** UBISOFT
- **PUBLISHER:** UBISOFT
- **ONLINE:** VERSUS, CO-OP
- **OTHER FORMATS:** PS2, XB, PC
- **WEB:** WWW.GHOSTRECON.COM/UK/GHOSTRECON3/INDEX.PHP
- **PLAYERS:** 1-24 (ONLINE)

PS2 XBOX PC XBOX 360

Need to know

What is it?

For the first time this takes place in the near-future and uses all manner of futuristic gadgets.

Facts

- Set in Mexico City in 2013
- Fight in a team of four Ghosts
- Unique Cross Com device lets you monitor the battlefield while you are playing

From the people who made...

Rainbow Six: Lockdown	80%
Ghost Recon 2: Summit Strike	86%

GHOST RECON ADVANCED WARFIGHTER™

The year's 2013 and this is *Ghost Recon...*

With a futuristic setting – the year 2013 to be precise – and a home on the Xbox 360 console, *Advanced Warfighter* is certainly set to be the most advanced *Ghost Recon* game yet.

The series has always been one of the most realistic around and, while the team have had a pretty loose rein on coming up with so far fictional futuristic war gadgets and weaponry, they've not gone as far as putting in time travel and ray guns.

The most notable new gadget is instead the cross com unit. Built into your soldier's goggles, this gives constantly updated information of what's going on around them. Very handy when you're standing in a battlefield chock full with landmines and snipers. Even more impressively, it highlights enemy soldiers on the battlefield that the unmanned air support drones have spotted. So there's far less slow progress through fields trying to make out camouflaged soldiers, and much faster-paced, tactical action.

You can switch to an air support drone at the touch of a button. Doing so lets you check out the battlefield ahead that you might otherwise not be able to see. In Detection mode, the drone flies low and logs all enemy soldiers for you. That is, unless it gets spotted by one of them. They tend not to be so keen on having their positions given away by a flying robot and are happy to render your eye in the sky useless with the aid of a few rounds of bullets.

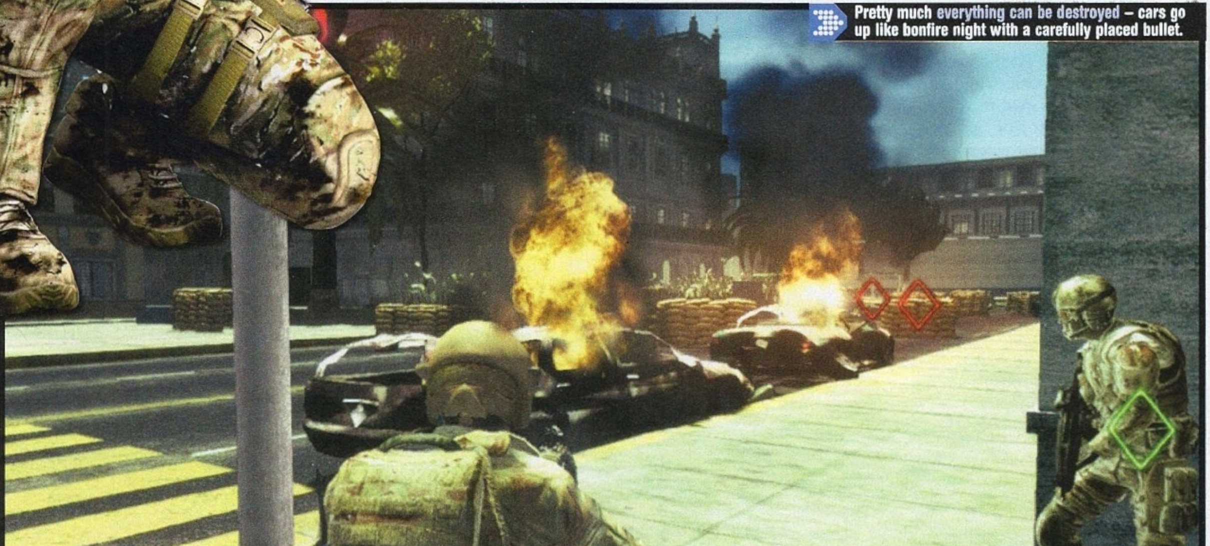
LADY LEAD

Less sci-fi-esque, but equally as useful in battle, are the other features your special war suit packs. Your helmet has an integrated radio which means you're in video contact with your commanders, who keep you updated on objectives throughout each level. Then there's night and thermal vision and a laser target designator. It all sounds pretty high-tech, and it is, but the majority of the game is still the same as it's always been and mainly involves shooting insurgents – and lots of them – before they shoot you.

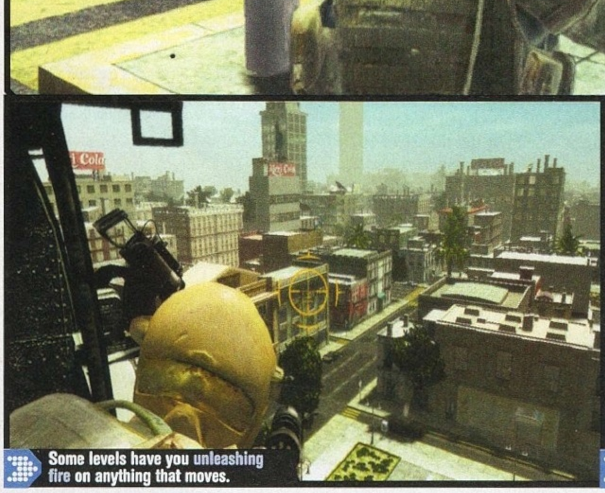
As ever, you also have a team of Ghosts to command, each with their own specialities. Done on the D-pad, you can choose commands like regroup and attack. You don't have to hold their hands quite as much as in *Rainbow Six* – they take cover and shoot down enemies without being told twice (or even once on some occasions).

The environments are far more urban than in previous games, too, helping with the modern-combat feel. As well as your futuristic gadgets and the multiple windows that pop up to show your commander and team mates', you can call in helicopter strikes and flip to an overhead view of each massive city environment whenever you feel the need.

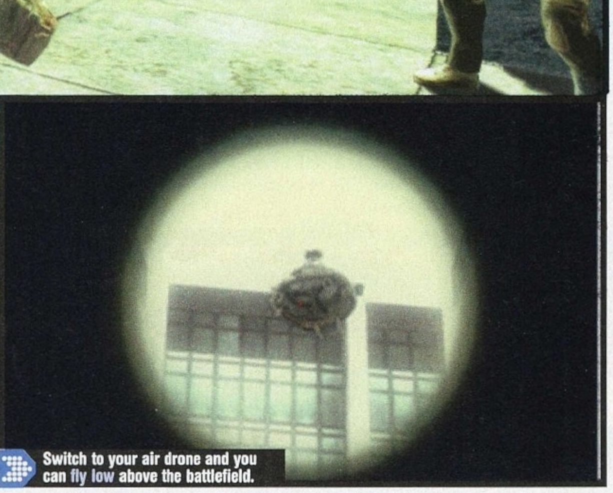
On the 360 and PC at least, Advanced Warfighter is looking like a big step up from the previous games. Other formats could end up with just as impressive versions. GM



Pretty much everything can be destroyed – cars go up like bonfire night with a carefully placed bullet.



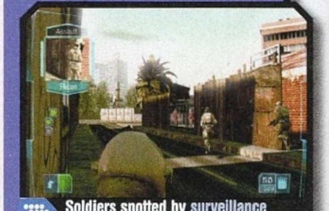
Some levels have you unleashing fire on anything that moves.



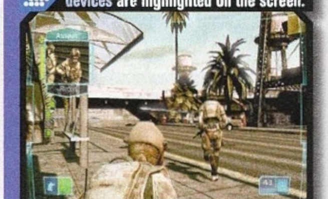
Switch to your air drone and you can fly low above the battlefield.

CROSS OVER

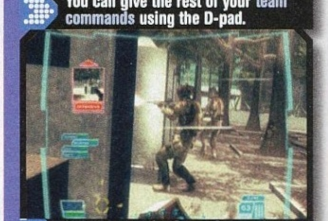
On the Xbox 360 and PC at least, the game will feature multiple windows that pop up, allowing you to see other parts of the battlefield. You can choose to see what any of the rest of your squad are seeing at any point, so send them up ahead first and you don't have to put yourself in any danger at all...



Soldiers spotted by surveillance devices are highlighted on the screen.



You can give the rest of your team commands using the D-pad.

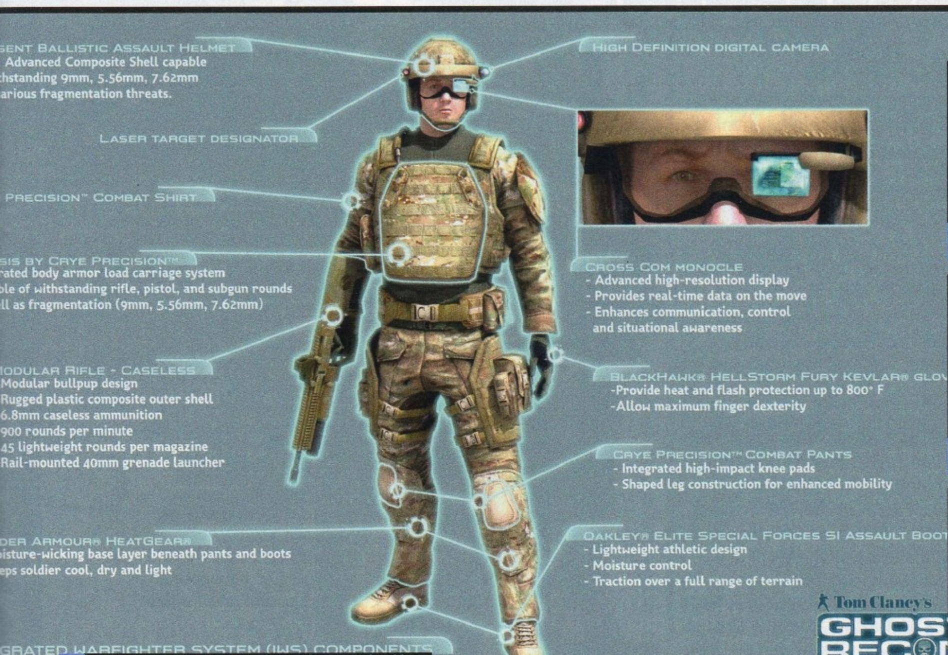


You can use the Cross Com to keep tabs on your teammates' progress.

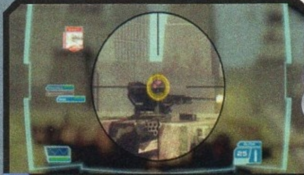
GHOST RECON: ADVANCED WARFIGHTER

SOLDIER OF THE FUTURE

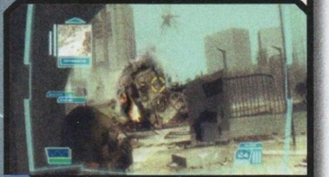
The body armour of your soldier has been carefully worked out by Ubisoft. Apparently, it's lightweight and makes the soldier near invisible to the enemy, while having all sorts of gadgets built in, like thermal vision and a monitoring system that gives you all your health info.


SENT BALLISTIC ASSAULT HELMET
Advanced Composite Shell capable
thstanding 9mm, 5.56mm, 7.62mm
arious fragmentation threats.
LASER TARGET DESIGNATOR
PRECISION™ COMBAT SHIRT
SIS BY CRYE PRECISION™
rated body armor load carriage system
ble of withstanding rifle, pistol, and subgun rounds
ll as fragmentation (9mm, 5.56mm, 7.62mm)
ODULAR RIFLE - CASELESS
Modular bullpup design
Rugged plastic composite outer shell
6.8mm caseless ammunition
900 rounds per minute
45 lightweight rounds per magazine
Rail-mounted 40mm grenade launcher
DER ARMOUR® HEATGEAR®
isture-wicking base layer beneath pants and boots
eps soldier cool, dry and light
GRATED WARFIGHTER SYSTEM (IWS) COMPONENTS
tight / Li
HIGH DEFINITION DIGITAL CAMERA
CROSS COM MONOCLE
- Advanced high-resolution display
- Provides real-time data on the move
- Enhances communication, control and situational awareness
BLACKHAWK® HELLSTORM FURY KEVLAR® GLOV
-Provide heat and flash protection up to 800° F
-Allow maximum finger dexterity
CRYE PRECISION™ COMBAT PANTS
- Integrated high-impact knee pads
- Shaped leg construction for enhanced mobility
OAKLEY® ELITE SPECIAL FORCES SI ASSAULT BOOT
- Lightweight athletic design
- Moisture control
- Traction over a full range of terrain
Tom Clancy's
GHOST RECON
ADVANCED WARFIGH

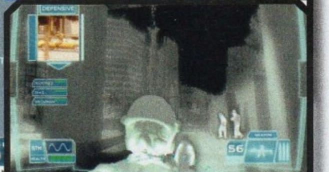
Check out that suit – stylish and useful should you find yourself in a war-type scenario.



At the tap of a button you can zoom in to pick off distant enemies.



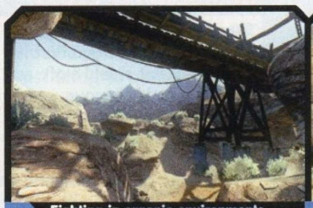
Use air support to give you an overhead view in one window.



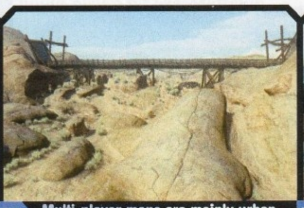
Built-in night vision means you never have to be scared of the dark.

GOING LIVE

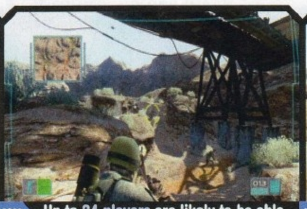
Online, *Ghost Recon: Advanced Warfighter* will have more features than most other squad-based shooters. For a start, the Character Identity System will let you create your own unique character to play as. The Cross Com will also be useable online – so players will be able to send out and direct drones, for instance, and enemies positions will show up on all players' maps. Then there's co-op – a brand new campaign that up to four players can take part in, on or offline.



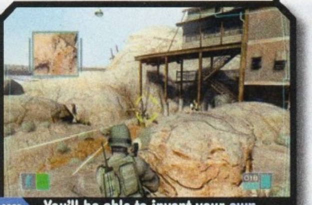
Fighting in organic environments varies quite a bit to city streets.



Multi-player maps are mainly urban with industrial and jungle levels.



Up to 24 players are likely to be able to battle it out online.

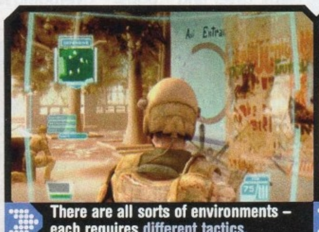


You'll be able to invent your own character, choosing his appearance.

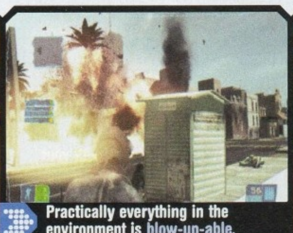
GHOSTLY

Each level will bring you different objectives, which are constantly updated. The game takes most of the navigating duties off your shoulders, leaving you free to plot strategies and, of course, shoot the enemies that are coming at you from all angles. The radar at the bottom of the screen shows exactly where your next objective is.

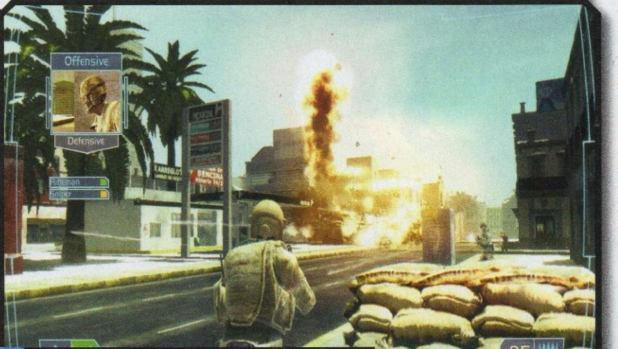
This time round, enemies are cleverer than most. They do all the usual taking cover and preserving their own lives, but there's more to it than that. If you let an enemy get away, they're likely to report your position to other soldiers in the area, meaning you'll have to fight with loads more if you mess up. Even more reason to gun 'em down mercilessly, then.



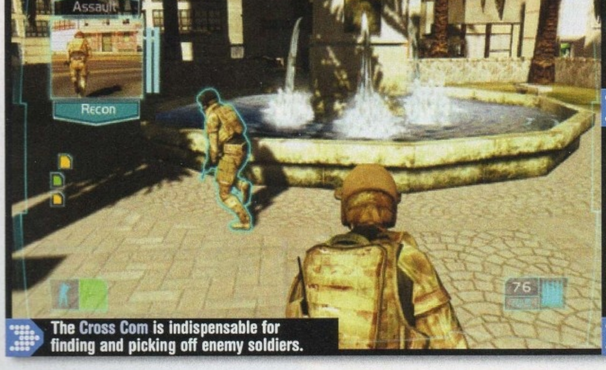
There are all sorts of environments – each requires different tactics.



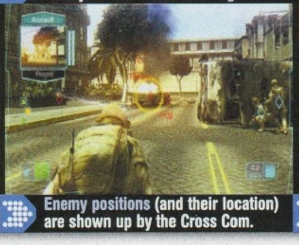
Practically everything in the environment is blow-up-able.


Offensive
Defensive

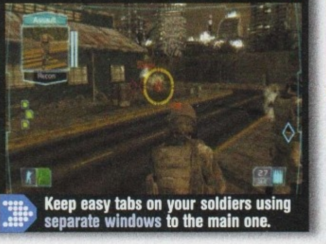
A look at the overhead map shows where the enemy soldiers have been sighted.


Assault
Recon

The Cross Com is indispensable for finding and picking off enemy soldiers.



Enemy positions (and their location) are shown up by the Cross Com.



Keep easy tabs on your soldiers using separate windows to the main one.

PREVIEWER: Kath

HANDS ON VERDICT

Tom Clancy's
GHOST RECON 3

HOW FINISHED?

CONTROLS

Left stick - Movement
Click left stick - Crouch/prone
Right stick - Aim
Click right stick - Aim/Hold breath
Right shoulder -Change shoulder

WE PLAYED IT IN...

Our own *GM* demo room

WHAT WE PLAYED

☑ Single-player campaign
☒ Co-op
☒ Online multi-player

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Anyone who's played other *GR's* in the series will feel immediately at home in their shiny new war suit. The controls and aiming are intuitive and precise and, while there are more gadgets to get to grips with, it treads the line between realism and fun well.

ANY PROBLEMS?

The sexy helmet viewpoint has been ditched in favour of the more traditional over-the-shoulder view.

BEST BIT SO FAR

The detail that lets you destroy almost everything – shoot out a car's petrol tank to blow it sky-high.

VERDICT

5
4
3
2
1

GM LOVES

+ Being able to check out what's going on ahead using a little flying drone
+ Masses of online features

GM HATES

- Having loads of high-tech gadgetry and still getting shot in the head

MOST WANTED METER

Likely to be the definitive squad-based shooter on 360, with a solid single-player game and masses of online modes. Looks amazing too.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ....Ghost Recon 2: Summit Strike
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Call of Duty 2

- **OUT:** APRIL • **FORMAT:** PS2 • **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** ROCKSTEADY STUDIOS • **PUBLISHER:** EIDOS • **ONLINE:** COPS VS. ROBBERS
- **OTHER FORMATS:** XB • **WEB:** WWW.EIDOS.CO.UK • **PLAYERS:** 1-8

URBAN CHAOS

Can Nick Mason go from T-Zero to hero?

Roll Call, *Zero Tolerance: City Under Fire* and now *Urban Chaos: Riot Response*… phew. Rockstead Studios' schizophrenic riot-'em-up has gone through more name changes than P. Diddy. Still, it's almost here now, and that's all that really matters eh?

In a refreshing departure from your usual first-person shooter back-story, a gang called the Burners have laid siege to our hero's city, instigating mass rioting and civil unrest. Set over a period of 12 months, you'll attempt to restore order by working alongside your valiant Emergency Service buddies. Issue commands via the D-pad and firemen will smash down doors; medics will dispense health packs while you get on with the business of killing. This is a real team effort.

SIN CITY

In another cool spin on the genre, Mason lugs around a massive riot shield. But this is much, much more than a simple gimmick (see Shield Wall). Later on in the game, gang members will wield their own shields and you'll batter one another into dazed submission. It's an unique experience – think Sumo wrestling meets stag rutting. With minigun-wielding maniacs lying in wait around every corner, it pays to keep your guard up.

The authentic presentation (right down to securing a real news anchor to provide the reporting), includes towering tenement blocks, realistic ragdolls, utterly convincing smoke, fire and water effects plus full Havoc physics.

FIRE STARTER

Urban Chaos really squeezes the remaining juice from our saggy PS2s. Factor in the well-realised human elements and fancy slow motion effects whenever a dramatic hostage situation unfolds and the potential is there for a real sleeper hit. But will *UC* be whitewashed by *Black*? We'll see soon enough… GM

Need to know

What is it?

Experience a year in the life of Nick Mason, ex-US marine and member of T-Zero, an elite counter-gang unit.

Facts

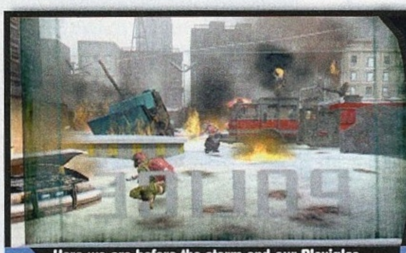
- Use your riot shield to block attacks and negotiate hazardous terrain
- Work with – and boss about – the emergency services

From the people who made…

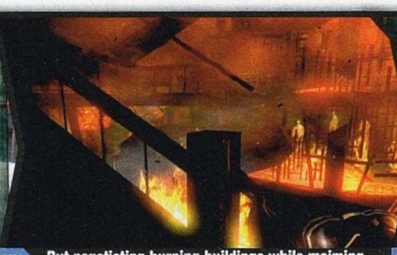
Nothing. Nowt.

SHIELD WALL

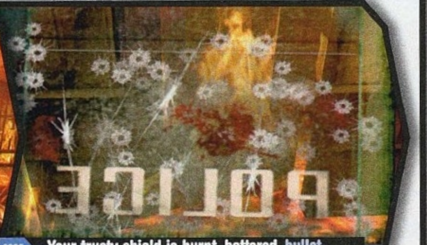
Mason's riot shield screams 'gimmick' at first, but if you don't learn to defend yourself very early on it's curtains for you in *Urban Chaos*. But it's not just meat cleavers and bullets you'll be dodging: environmental puzzles like backdrafts and explosive pipes will also test your awareness, sucking you into the crime fighting experience. By the end of each level, Mason and his first line of defence will have been to hell and back – but if you know what to expect you may be able to come out alive.



Here we are before the storm and our Plexiglas shield is in pristine condition. We can see clearly.



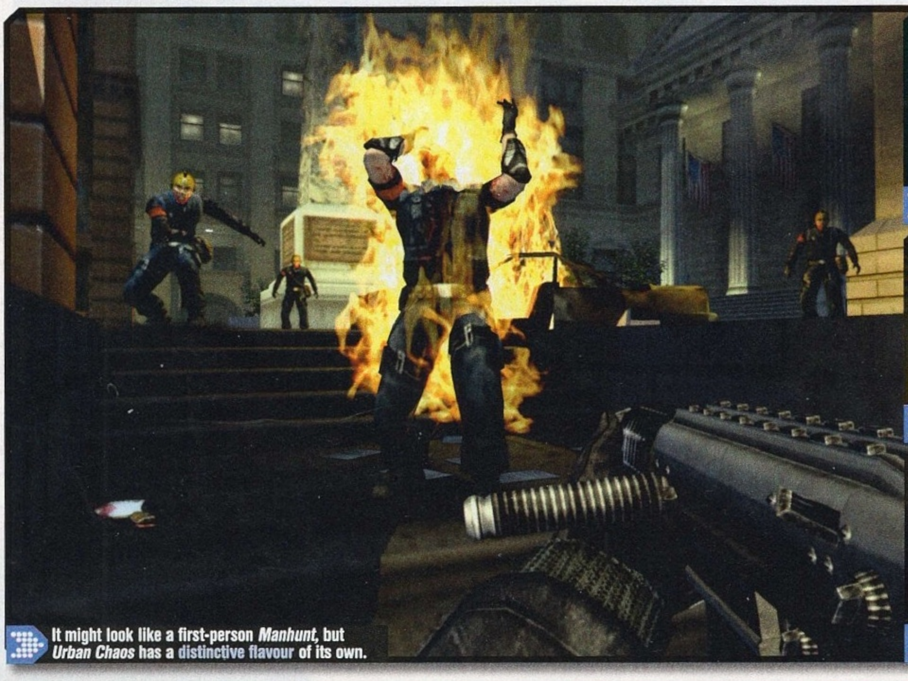
But negotiating burning buildings while maiming psychos takes its toll. Visibility is poor now.



Your trusty shield is burnt, battered, bullet riddled and butt ugly. Can't see a damn thing.

A RIOT LAUGH

Although Mason is a no holds barred kind of guy, *Urban Chaos* pats you on the back for taking captives alive. In fact, rewards play a substantial role in the game – there are over 55, including bonus levels and upgraded weaponry.



It might look like a first-person *Manhunt*, but *Urban Chaos* has a distinctive flavour of its own.

Don't get too enthusiastic with your taser, this isn't a barbecue…

Mason's trusty shottie means death for thugs. He didn't stand a chance.

Brave firemen play a vital part by helping you out at certain points.

PREVIEWER: Rob

HANDS ON VERDICT

URBAN CHAOS

HOW FINISHED? 85%

CONTROLS

- L1 Use shield
- R1 Fire
- R2 Secondary Fire
- ⊗ Jump
- ◎ Reload
- ◎ Cycle weapons
- D-pad - Issue orders

WE PLAYED IT AT…

GM Towers

WHAT WE PLAYED

- ☑ Hope Street Mission
- ☒ Multi-player

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Surprisingly well, actually. From the moment you first hoist your riot shield aloft, any notion that this is your bog-standard FPS is booted out of the window. Add masked hoodlums ripped straight out of *Manhunt* and let the blasting commence.

ANY PROBLEMS?

With *Black* looming over the horizon, *UC* is in for one heck of a scrap. This doesn't quite match up to Criterion's opus.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Bodyslamming some thug with our shield, before using the taser and – oops! – overdoing it a bit. Result: chargrilled crook.

VERDICT

5 4 3 2 1

GM LOVES

- + Thumping thugs with our big plastic shield
- + Atmosphere – it feels like a city under siege

GM HATES

- - Later battles against shield-wielding foes are frustrating

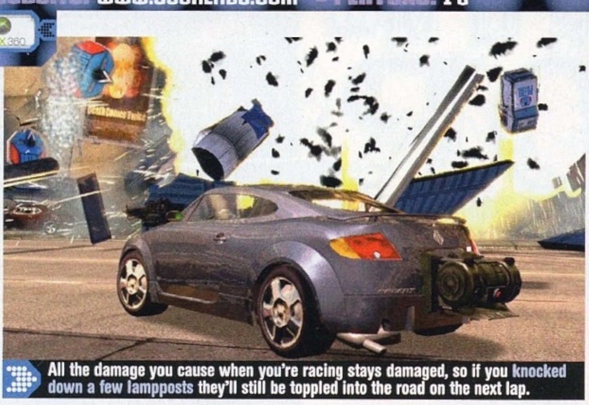
MOST WANTED METER

A innovative take on a knackered genre, it'll be well worth T-Zeroing in on *Urban Chaos*. We predict a riot.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ....True Crime: NYC
BIGGEST RIVAL: ....Black
......................................(out in February)

OUT: FEB **FORMAT:** XB 360 **PRICE:** £49.99 **DEV:** PSEUDO INTERACTIVE **PUB:** SEGA **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE **WEBSITE:** WWW.SEGALABS.COM **PLAYERS:** 1-6


All the damage you cause when you're racing stays damaged, so if you knocked down a few lampposts they'll still be toppled into the road on the next lap.

FULL AUTO

Wreck everything then unwreck it all again...

Remember the Xbox launch game *Wreckless?* It was a driving game that looked amazing with motion blur and graphical effects galore and a heavy emphasis on being able to smash everything up. On the downside, it was a terrible game to actually play, which eventually became too frustrating to persevere with about halfway through a level where your car kept plopping into water that you couldn't see.

Full Auto has a fair bit in common with *Wreckless.* It's an arcade racer where everything is smash-up-able, and its high res graphics more than show off what its new console platform is capable of. Plough into a few lampposts and a market stall on one lap and the mess will still be there when you're passing on the next lap. Plus you've got guns on your cars that enable you to shoot at your opponents instead of just having to rely on driving skills to get past them.

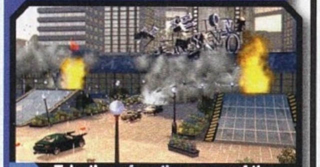
FULL ON

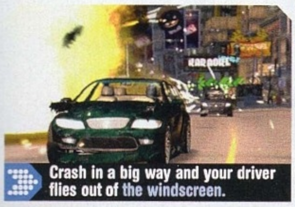
Another feature is 'Unwreck' – at the touch of a button you can reverse time to undo a crash or a badly taken turn. It adds a bit more to the driving/shooting mix if nothing else. It *is* similar to *Wreckless* but fortunately not too much. *Full Auto* plays far better and there's much more to it – for one thing, a comprehensive online mode that should play a bit like *Midtown Madness 3* with lots of different modes as well as normal racing. Could be lots of fun.

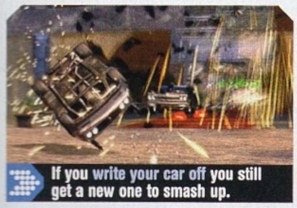
Kath Brice

CUT UP

Like any good arcade racer, *Full Auto* has plenty of shortcuts – mainly pretty mad ones involving ramps and smashing through buildings. Unlike most other racers, if you realise you've missed a shortcut, you can always reverse time and do it again.


Take the safe option or one of the massive ramps – it's up to you.


Crash in a big way and your driver flies out of the windscreen.


If you write your car off you still get a new one to smash up.

VERDICT

GM LOVES

- + Being able to smash up absolutely everything
- + Arcade handling and big guns on our cars

GM HATES

- – The Unwreck feature might prove to be little more than a gimmick

MOST WANTED METER

It's looking lovely on the 360 and there's plenty of smashing up fun to be had. If *Gotham's* a bit serious for you, it's well worth looking out for.

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OUT: 24TH FEB **FORMAT:** PC **PRICE:** £34.99 **DEVELOPER:** DEEP RED GAMES **PUBLISHER:** ATARI **ONLINE:** NO **SPECIAL:** NO **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE **WEB:** WWW.ATARI.COM/US/GAMES/TYCOON_CITY/PC **PLAYERS:** 1

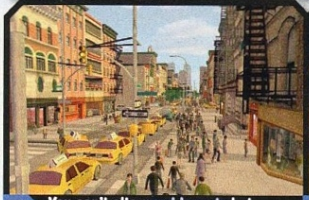
PC

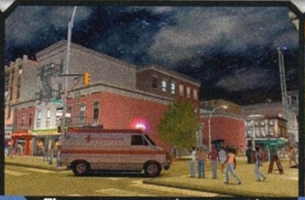
TYCOON CITY NEW YORK

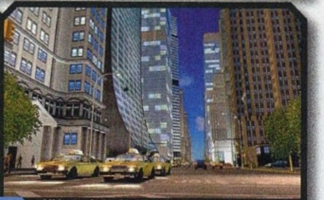
Statue of Liberty City stories...

TOUR-IST

Feeling proud of your bustling metropolis? Then 'Take a Tour' in the first person on an open-topped bus...


You can't alter road layouts but there's still lots to customise.

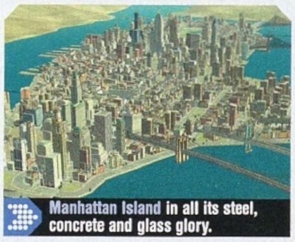

The emergency services are out in force to keep things in check.


NY at night is an arresting sight what with all those impressive skyscrapers.

Zoos, the moon, rollercoasters, trains, airlines and trailer parks. Phew! Is there nothing us Tycoons haven't masterminded? Next on our agenda: the city that never sleeps – New York.

Starting your journey in the humble beginnings of Greenwich Village, you have to chat to residents to discover what amenities they want and where they want them. This might only mean a decent pizzeria a first, or a cool corner café to chill out in. Of course, no one wants to drink in a plain building, so *TC: NY* let's you jazz environments up to make them more popular.

Once Greenwich has fulfilled its potential as a teeming bastion of hippiness, a new district is unlocked. Each zone – be it Soho, Tribeca, Little Italy, China Town, Central Park or Midtown – is culturally unique, meaning there's always some fresh new challenge to sink your teeth into.


Manhattan Island in all its steel, concrete and glass glory.

WE LOVE NY

As you progress, building upgrades becomes available. giving you a great reason to return to previously 'completed' districts to renovate and refurbish your existing facilities. Later on, the sky is quite literally the limit as you'll whip up towering skyscrapers, manage nightclubs, organise Central Park concerts and mastermind a cutting-edge fashion business.

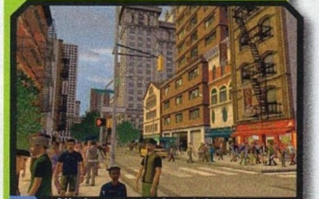
Surveying your 3D city with all of its 64,000 cosmopolitan inhabitants is an incredible moment. A true living, breathing metropolis, it's a fitting reward for all your blood, sweat and tears.

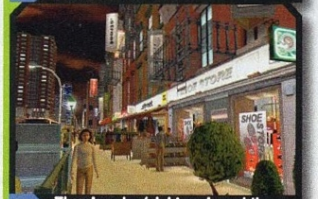
In with a great shout of becoming *the* strategy game of 2006, we can't wait to take a great big bite out of this juicy Big Apple.

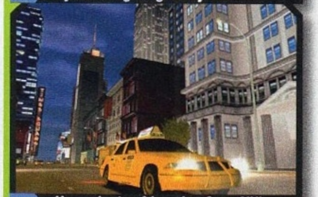
Rob Taylor

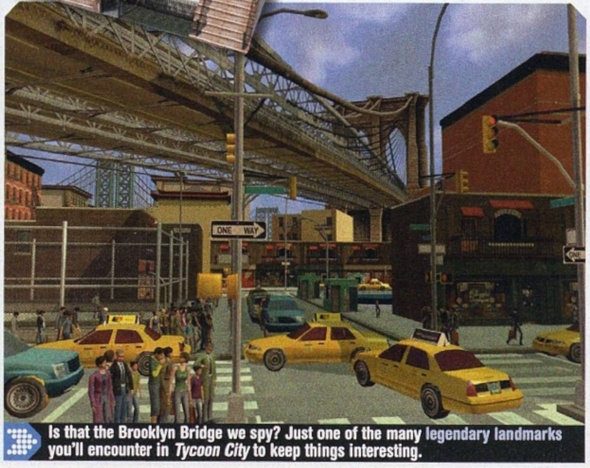
NY-LON

Prove yourself a true tycoon and you'll unlock famous landmarks like the Statue of Liberty or Empire State Building in your own NY. Or how about throwing a major street party like the Thanksgiving Day Parade or the famous bash at Time Square on New Year's Eve?


All shapes and sizes inhabit the streets of Greenwich.


There's a day/night cycle and the dynamic lighting really dazzles.


Hear plenty of beeping from NY's famous yellow cabs.


Is that the Brooklyn Bridge we spy? Just one of the many legendary landmarks you'll encounter in *Tycoon City* to keep things interesting.

VERDICT

GM LOVES

- + Throwing New Year parties! Altogether now: Three, two, one...
- + Near bottomless depth

GM HATES

- – Keeping your city up and running takes a monster PC

MOST WANTED METER

Start spreadin' the news – this is one game set in New York we most certainly want to be a part of. We're building our hopes up for this.

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OUT: MARCH • **FORMAT:** XB • **PRICE:** £39.99 • **DEVELOPER:** PANDEMIC
• **PUBLISHER:** THQ • **ONLINE:** MULTI-PLAYER • **OTHER FORMATS:** PS2, PC
• **WEB:** HTTP://WWW.FULLSPECTRUMWARRIOR.COM/FSW2/INDEX.PHP • **PLAYERS:** 1 TO 8

PS2
XBOX
PC

FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR TEN HAMMERS

This time there is a bit more DIY about it...

You could see the enemy, but not shoot them. Instead, the terrorists stood still while you out-flanked, out-thought and out-fought them. Every battle was the same, every tactic unchanged; and it just **got easier as the game wore on. Yep, the original *Full Spectrum Warrior* had a few problems, but the rest was so brilliant it almost didn't matter.**

Which is exactly where *Ten Hammers* comes in, because it looks like it's healed of almost all of those old wounds, while retaining the inventive and sophisticated gameplay. The same 'command and click' system has been kept, but now you can take the odd sniper shot for your team, exercising fingers instead of brains. You can also split a team into two, sending pairs of soldiers into buildings to use the new vertical feature to shoot down onto the enemy from on high. Which also provides a great way to deal with an enhanced enemy, who are more aware of your movements and will even respond to your own tactics.

It's not just the already slick gameplay that's been improved, either. So instead of the rough plot and in-game cinematics of the original, a big story, big cutscenes and some really big explosions have all been added to make the drama of playing *Full Spectrum Warrior: Ten Hammers* really hit home.

Need to know

What is it?

It's the follow up to RTS *Full Spectrum Warrior* in which you controlled two squads of soldiers but never fired a round yourself. Winning is all in the strategy.

Facts

- Twelve levels of solo battle with the chance to rewind and replay any time you fail
- Head to head and co-operative battles over Xbox Live
- Command US grunts, special forces and United Nations peacekeeping soldiers
- Take control of tanks, Bradley APCs and Humvees

Rumour

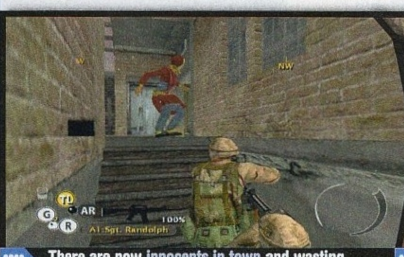
The ultra-hard Army mode will once again appear, even if the US Army won't be buying the game.

From the people who made...

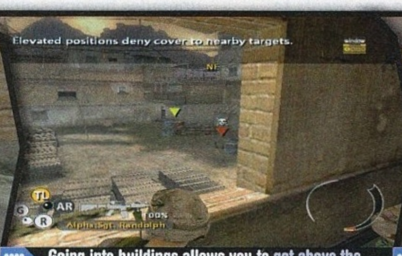
Full Spectrum Warrior.................. 85%
Star Wars: Battlefront.................. 82%

IT'S HAMMER TIME

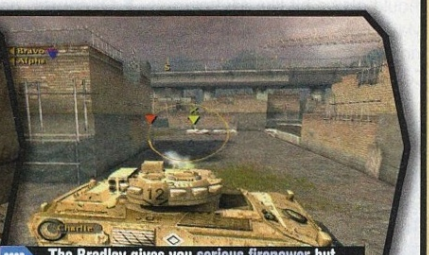
Full Spectrum Warrior: Ten Hammers' changes look small but they make huge differences to the gameplay...



There are now **innocents in town** and wasting them is generally a bad thing.



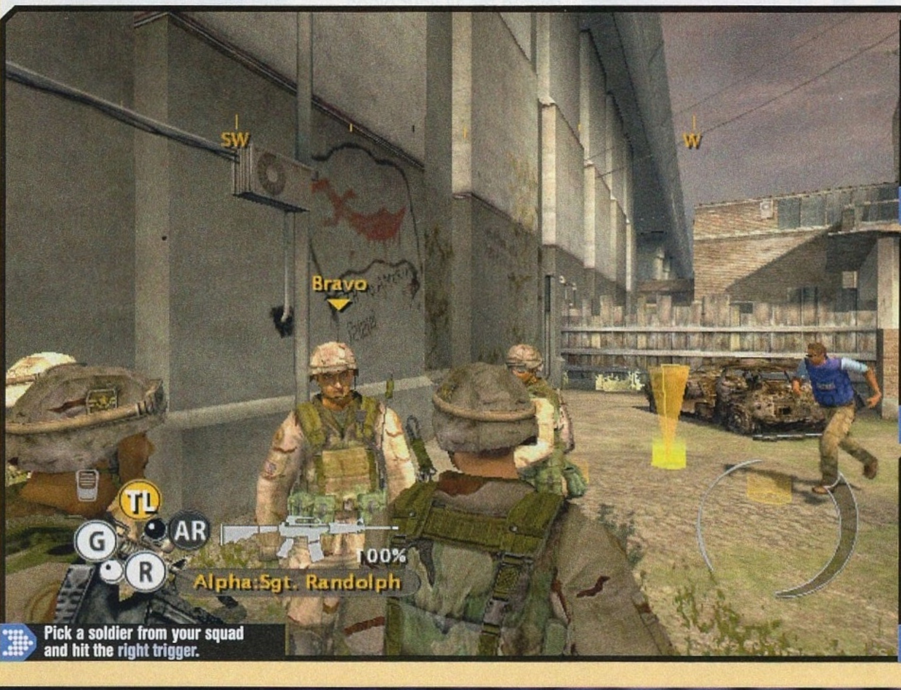
Going into buildings allows you to **get above the enemy**, and for them to get above you, too.



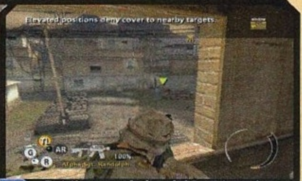
The Bradley gives you **serious firepower** but watch out for the terrorist rocket launchers.

ARMY OF ONE

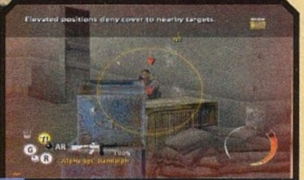
In a move designed to please everyone who whined that they 'totally owned' the terrorists but couldn't actually shoot them you can now fire a weapon yourself and prove yourself as the sure shot you said you were.



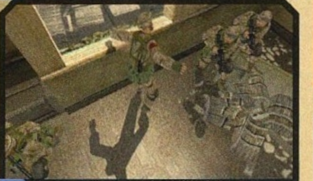
Pick a soldier from your squad and hit the **right trigger**.



Put the crosshairs **right on target** and hit Ⓧ to take the shot.



But you'll need to be quick or **the bar on the right** will fill....



...and the terrorist will **shoot you dead**. Not so clever now, are you?

PREVIEWER: Alex

HANDS ON VERDICT

FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR TEN HAMMERS

HOW FINISHED? 75%

CONTROLS

Ⓐ – Cancel Order
Ⓨ – Change Unit
Ⓑ – Fire
Ⓧ – Issue Order
R – Manual Fire
L – Zoom in
BACK - Map

WE PLAYED IT AT...

GamesMaster's Camp X-Ray, somewhere in Bath

WHAT WE PLAYED

☑ Improved shooting skill
☑ Commanded a Bradley APC
☑ Split squad into two teams
☑ Strolled inside a building
☑ Used new command system

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

We want more! There are so many great additions and so many subtle changes that we have to see more. This is great stuff but without seeing the later levels it's hard to know if they've managed to squeeze in all those potentially brilliant ideas or if the fun fades.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Enemies don't move as we hoped. Shooting for yourself might unbalance the tactical side of the game.

BEST BIT SO FAR

The vehicles. Taking control of the Bradley armoured car gives you so much power to take out the terrorists.

VERDICT

5
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GM LOVES

+ It makes you think about each move
+ The way you panic once the bullets fly

GM HATES

- The FPS bit might dumb it down
- Plot cheese isn't really needed

MOST WANTED METER

Spilling over with fresh ideas, *FSW:TH* has potential for true greatness and with this sequel, Pandemic have enough time to really perfect it.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ......Brothers In Arms: ......Earned In Blood
OUT SOONER: ....Ghost Recon: ......Advanced War Fighter

LOCK AND LOAD... DOOM RPG IS HERE.

DOOM
RPG
Bull Demon attacks..
65 71 37
38 17 37
Menu
Map

"You Must Experience This Game"

WG WORLD RATING 5/5

"Superbly Playable"

"A Fresh Experience For Mobile"

"Hugely Recommended"

IGN RATING 9.0/10

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IN CINEMAS DECEMBER 2, 2005.

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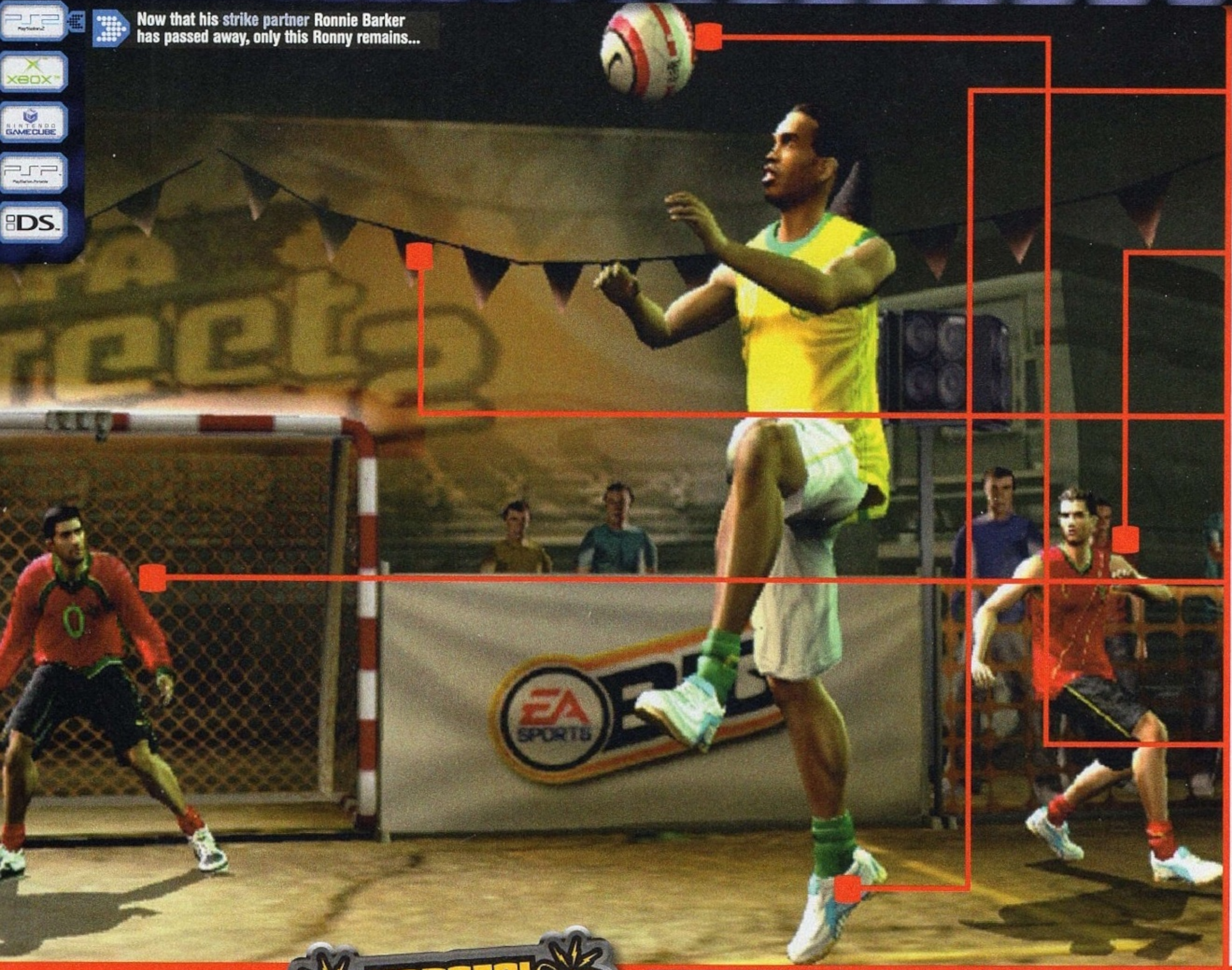
OUT: 24TH FEBRUARY • **FORMAT:** PS2 • **PRICE:** £39.99 • **DEVELOPER:** EA • **PUBLISHER:** EA
• **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** XB, GC, PSP, DS • **WEB:** WWW.EA.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-4



Now that his strike partner Ronnie Barker has passed away, only this Ronny remains...

COMBOS

FIFA Street 2's combo multipliers now soar all the way up to x5. You'll effortlessly switch from basic juggling into juggling tricks into low passes into high passes into shots, earning yourself massive GameBreaker points into the process.

TEAMMATES

Although it's still not true eight-player co-op, up to eight challengers can partake in *Street 2's* new Skill Challenge mode, where you'll focus on putting together juggling combos. There's also an *SSX*-style trick book to help you learn your trade.

HIGH PITCHED

Street 2 allows you to create your ultimate 'home' ground. Customise all four ends, add background details, fiddle about with the texture of your pitch and even age it like a fine wine. All in all, there are a whopping 30,000 combinations...

KEEPERS!

The original *Street's* keepers were dumber than David James and less effective than Chris Kirkland, but for the sequel they're fully controllable. Charge down shots, harry the opposition or even dribble your way downfield and score.

BREAK IT UP

Level 1 GameBreakers will be familiar to *FIFA Street* veterans – wait until your meter fills up, find some space and let rip. Voila! Goal. Beat opponents to remove goals from their own tallies, leave the whole team for dead before thumping the ball home and – no matter what the score is – you'll automatically win the game. Now that's what we call a GameBreaker!

UPDATE!

EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK AT EA'S STREET SOCCER SIM

FIFA Street 2

Streets ahead of the original or a dead end?

Need to know

What is it?

FIFA Street gets rebuilt from the ground up by the guys behind *NBA Street*.

Facts

- 300 players and 200 trick moves
- Recruit legends like Pele, Cruyff, Gazza and Cantona

From the people who made...

FIFA Street	72%
NBA Street V3	86%

REPLAY!

Street 2 sports a funked up 'replay on demand' function, meaning you can endlessly rewind that last minute scorcher to really rub your mates' noses in it. EA is keen to emphasise the 'win at any cost' aspect of the footy action on offer – this is a street war, after all.

Lanky Henry is mesmerised by the midget Saviola.

Oh, nice kit! Nigeria definitely wins our vote for coolest cats.

Ronaldo skips past three defenders before flicking the ball skywards and thumping it straight past the despairing keeper. We tear around *GM* Towers with our shirts over our heads screaming, "Eat my goal!" Sickeningly cheesy, yes, but then playing *FIFA Street 2* is all about: 1. Bragging rights, 2. Outrageous skill and 3. Flair. In that order.

STREET WISE

A pre/post school or pub pick up, play and throwaway experience, we desperately wanted to love the original *Street*. After all, a footy game emphasising skill, style, speed, violence and – most importantly – *humiliating your mates* is right up our alley. But get down to the nitty gritty (i.e. play it for more than half an hour) and it reveals itself to be a miserable exercise in sloppy handling, incredibly dumb AI and skin-deep gameplay.

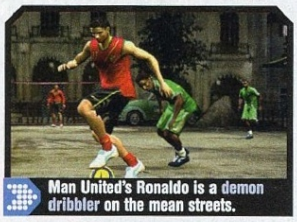
But new real-time ball juggling, used in combination with the trick stick to perform juggle beats, adds a much-needed extra dimension to *FIFA Street 2's* gameplay.

Other improvements, like the new end-cam (rather than viewing the action from the side) and varied size pitches mean there's more of a strategic element to the frenetic gameplay than ever before, especially when you consider the beefed up GameBreakers. You can now chalk goals off the opposition's tally and even win games with one glorious move!

The Rule the Streets Career mode has also been fleshed out, so get ready to play alongside a pal, build your own home pitch and deal with inter-squad rivalries. It's all set to culminate in a gladiatorial showdown in an underground tourney in Berlin. There's even a chance to join the national team of your choice and play alongside your heroes. In all, *Street 2* promises around 14 hours of solid gameplay.

STRIP SEARCH

We still have our reservations about the actual footballing techniques in *Street 2*, but this intense, arcadey kickabout is shaping up nicely. And the fact that ex-So Solid fella Harvey's 'commentary' has been canned means we like it 100 times more than the original... GM



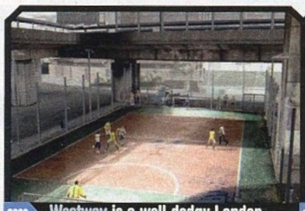
Man United's Ronaldo is a demon dribbler on the mean streets.

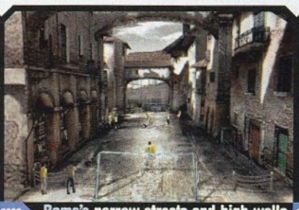
Becks gives the Swedes a right old mashing with his shooting skills.

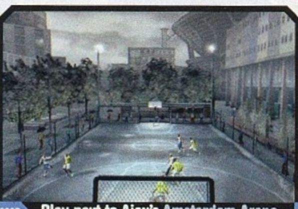
> "REAL-TIME BALL JUGGLING ADDS A MUCH-NEEDED EXTRA DIMENSION TO FIFA STREET 2'S GAMEPLAY"

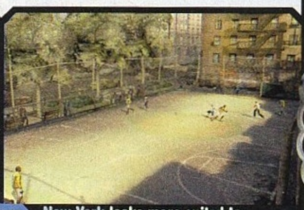
FIFA PITCH

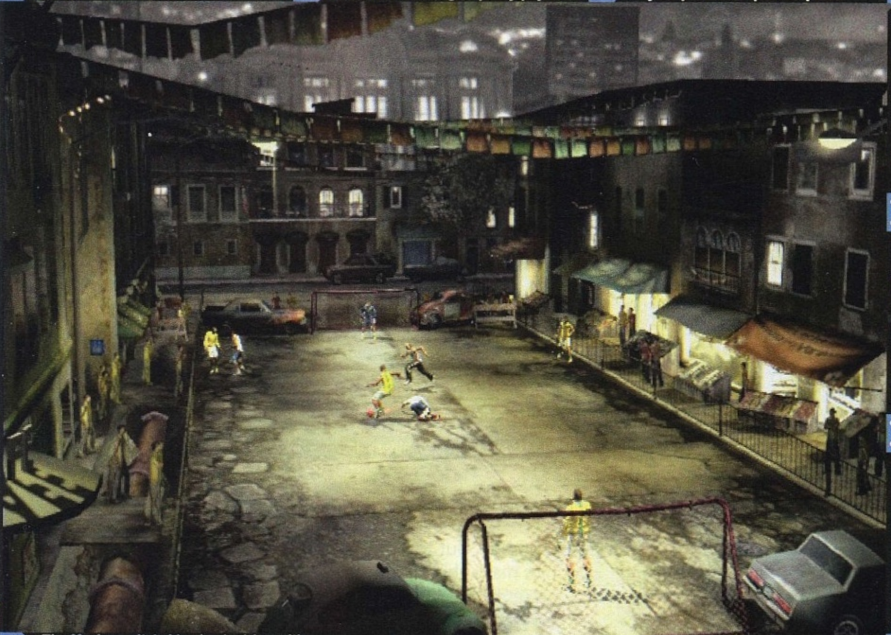
One of the inspired new additions to *FIFA Street 2's* is the pitches. They now all vary in length and width – up to 50% more than the original in some cases. From the narrow avenues and alleyways of Rome to the wide expanses of New York, you'll have to alter your tactics and learn when to switch between silky skills and uncompromising brutality to rule the streets.

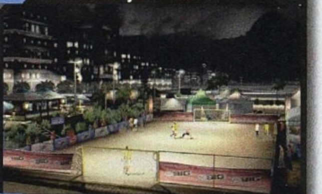

Westway is a well dodgy London hangout. Looks grim, doesn't it?

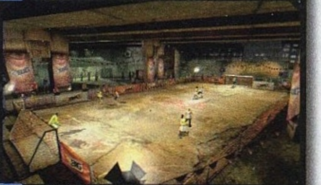

Rome's narrow streets and high walls mean the action gets pretty physical.

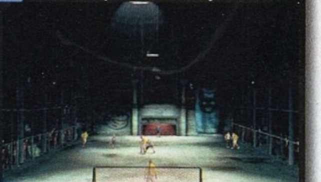

Play next to Ajax's Amsterdam Arena – your pitch isn't quite so plush.


New York looks more suited to basketball if you ask us.


The Mexican pitchside simply drips with atmosphere. Anyone fancy a burrito?

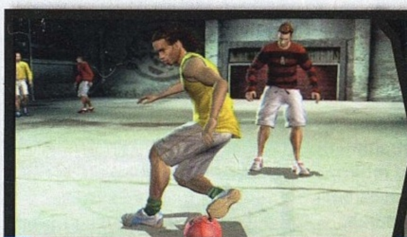

Rio's sublime Barra Beach in the nighttime is the ultimate pitch.

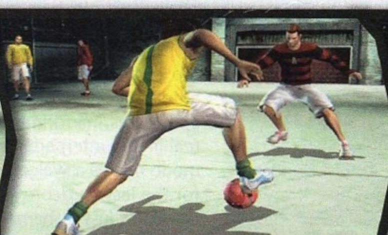

Cameroon plumps for the old rural look, complete with muddy floor.

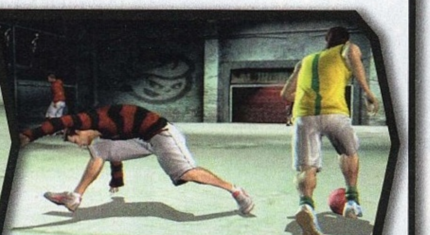

Street hits the Berlin underground – scary and dark is our verdict.

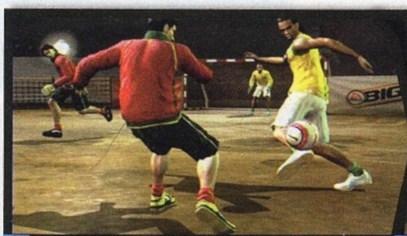
TRICKY TREAT

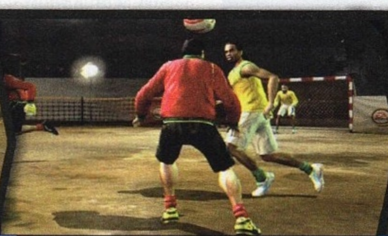
It was a giggle to bewitch our opponents through creative twiddling on the trick stick in the original *Street*, but it was pretty basic stuff. For *Street 2*, the trick stick now has eight directional options instead of the usual four. Add together all those shoulder button combos and we're talking somewhere in the region of 200 trick moves – over four times as many as the original. This season, the trick stick now plays an important role in defence. If you counter your opponent's attack perfectly, you'll whip the ball from his toes.

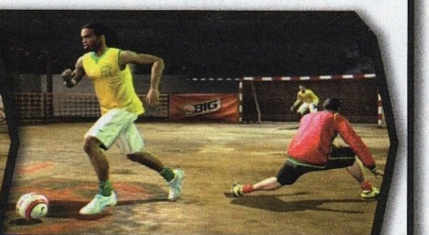

Shimmy up to an opponent and get jiggy with the right analogue to dazzle him with your footwork.

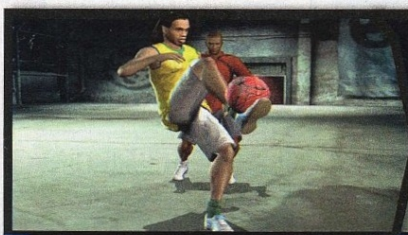

Hold left or right to pull off the corresponding feint. Whoosh – he makes it look easy.

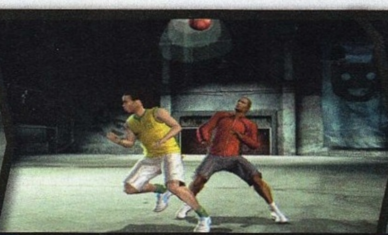

Leaving his opposite number in a flap, Ronny races clear and on to victory.

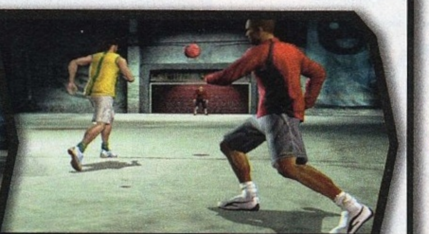

Hold down on L1 to get *FIFA Street 2's* new juggling trick underway…


Then you have to hold up on your trick stick to lob the ball over your marker.


He flies one way, you plus the ball and head the other. There, it's simple, isn't it?


The snazzy new extreme tricks are triggered via L1, L2, L3 and trick stick combos.


Ridiculously tricky to pull off, they'll boost your GameBreaker no end so it's worth persevering.


But when it comes to one-upmanship, they're hard to beat. Your mates will hate you for this!

PREVIEWER: Rob

HANDS ON VERDICT

HOW FINISHED? 80%

CONTROLS
- L1 Juggle
- R1 Sprint
- ⊗ Low pass
- ⊡ High pass
- ◎ Shoot/tackle
- △ Show off
- Right analogue - Trick stick

WE PLAYED IT AT…
In a top secret London location.

WHAT WE PLAYED
- ☑ Versus match
- ☑ Pitch building mode
- ☒ Single player

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

The over-elaborate animations and sluggish response times of the original are a thing of the past, which bumps the fun factor up immeasurably. For pure end-to-end nail-biting action, *Street 2* is hard to top.

ANY PROBLEMS?

There's way too much emphasis on juggling tricks, combos, multipliers and GameBreakers.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Playing against a fellow journo who didn't know his nutmegs from his flip flaps, we ran riot. We dribbled the goalie out of his area, beat two players for skill before thumping the winner from the half way line!

VERDICT

5 4 3 2 1

GM LOVES
- + Dumping opponents on their arses
- + All those trick moves

GM HATES
- – More luck than skill based
- – Needs to concentrate more on pass 'n' move

MOST WANTED METER

That it'll be a runaway hit with punters is a forgone conclusion, but it'll take more than a few flip flaps to win GM over. Review next ish.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ……………FIFA Street
BIGGEST RIVAL: ….Pro Evolution Soccer 5

• OUT: FEB • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: CAPCOM • PUBLISHER: CAPCOM • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.CAPCOM.COM • PLAYERS: 1

These types of games look incredibly dynamic, but there's little substance behind the constant show of strength.

Devil KINGS

It's the *Dallas* to Koei's *Dynasty*...

D*evil Kings* looks like *Dynasty Warriors*, *Devil Kings* plays like *Dynasty Warriors* and there's a very good reason for this – it basically *is Dynasty Warriors*, but with a Capcom hat on.

What this means is that *Devil Kings* is just one giant scrap of a game, where one warrior must scythe through fields of lesser warriors with a weapon the size of Big Ben.

Where the Capcom hat comes into play is the tone of game: where Koei's *Dynasty Warriors* is period-specific and historically tight, *Devil Kings* is pure fantasy, partly daft and even has laser guns in it… It also has some of the strangest cutscenes around, with hulking samurai super-heroes hugging each other, then punching each other's lights out.

DIABOLICAL

The problem with these types of games is that what you experience in the first 10 minutes of play is basically all of the game. The thrill of sending a legion of soldiers sprawling across the screen like bowling pins is one you're going to have to enjoy again and again. And again. So for those looking for variety and different challenges, this isn't the type of game for you.

But if you come at *Devil Kings* with your eyes open to its limitations and a thirst for slaughtering, this has to the potential to really make you chuckle.

David Harrison

GUN-BRAVE

It's not just hack and slashing – *Devil Kings* has guns! Choose the DK with the automatic weapons strapped to his fists.

There's a total of 12 characters to play as, each having six weapons.

She might look dainty, but don't mess with a lass with a gattling gun.

Having guns for arms is really useful when you're fighting swordsmen.

VERDICT

GM LOVES
- + The daft cutscenes
- + Creating carnage with a huge axe

GM HATES
- – It's just a *Dynasty Warriors* clone
- – It's takes ages to get through any gate. Ages

MOST WANTED METER

If you're desperate – and we mean desperate – for *Dynasty Warriors*-style mayhem, then February can't come soon enough for you.

5 4 3 2 1

• OUT: MARCH • FORMAT: 360 • PRICE: £44.99 • DEVELOPER: CLIMAX • PUBLISHER: THQ • ONLINE: MULTI-PLAYER • SPECIAL: LIVE UPDATES • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: NONE • PLAYERS: 1-20

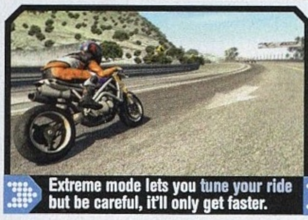
motogp 2006

Ultimate Racing Technology

Two wheels are faster than four...

FULL THROTTLE

MotoGP's Extreme mode returns for when simulation gets too much to handle, with slightly easier tracks to navigate.



Extreme mode lets you tune your ride but be careful, it'll only get faster.

The tracks are wider than in GP mode making for a slightly easier

Although you're not rewarded for it, nothing shouts cool like a wheelie.

M*otoGP* **is back on track, roaring with energy and all set to offer probably the fastest racing experience ever seen on a console.**

The thing about motorbikes (especially the GP variety) is that they're fast – really fast – and speed is always a tricky thing to represent in a game. Too fast and the game becomes unplayable, too slow and the sense of realism is lost – a thing that's not greatly appreciated when you've just sat down looking forward to some high-octane extreme biking.

TRACK IT DOWN

It's in this area then that *MotoGP* really excels. Running in HD at a solid 60fps, this will certainly have you panicking on your first couple of attempts as you career down the track at near 200mph. But the crisp, clear graphics make this a more than enjoyable experience every time – the sense of speed is perfect.

Don't be afraid of leaving skidmarks here, they'll stay forever.

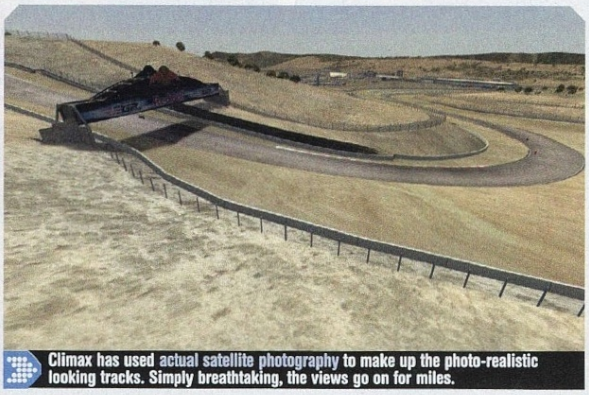
FRESH START

Launching alongside the start of the real-life GP, the game features all of the stats and information for 2006 and includes every online mode you could ask for – from quick, arcade races to fully-fledged tournaments.

It's even been hinted at that the game will update automatically as the year progresses, mirroring the sport's real life counterpart. Extreme mode makes a welcome return for the less hardcore gamers out there. It's just a shame there's nothing particularly new or groundbreaking included.

Still, with a short development time of little over seven months, we've got to be grateful for what we've got coming – what looks like another bloody good *MotoGP* title.

Mike Oldman



Climax has used actual satellite photography to make up the photo-realistic looking tracks. Simply breathtaking, the views go on for miles.

RIDE IT

Hitting high speeds from the sofa – by far the safest way to enjoy the sport.

One false move and you've got a very expensive domino rally.

Fast uphill means even faster going down so brace yourself…

No points for showing off, it can all be lost in the blink of an eye.

VERDICT

GM LOVES
- + It being so real you panic at high speed
- + All the tracks, stats and player information

GM HATES
- – The lack of anything truly new to the series
- – May not be everyone's cup of tea

MOST WANTED METER

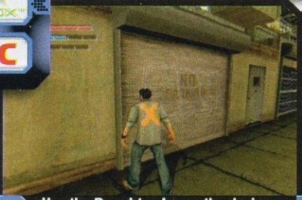
Motorbike racing may not be your thing normally, but give *MotoGP* a chance and you could be hooked forever – trust us on this one.

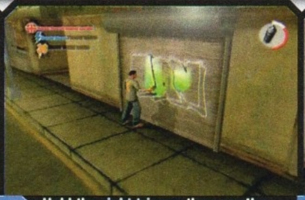
5 4 3 2 1

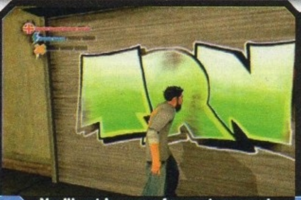
- **OUT:** FEBRUARY • **FORMAT:** XB • **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** THE COLLECTIVE • **PUBLISHER:** ATARI • **ONLINE:** NO
- **SPECIAL:** VERSUS MODE • **OTHER FORMATS:** PS2, PC • **WEB:** WWW.GETTINGUP.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-2

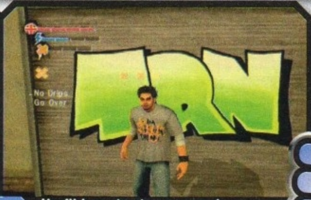
CAN-CAN

The bigger tags require you to direct your paint skills; any wall can be tagged, but the ones needed to complete the level are clearly signposted.


Use the D-pad to choose the design and style of your next tag.


Hold the right trigger, then use the stick to spray in smooth lines.

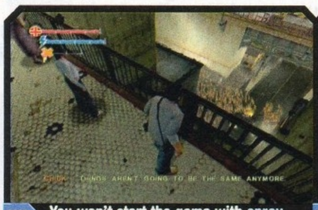

You'll get bonuses for neatness and speed, and not leaving any drips.

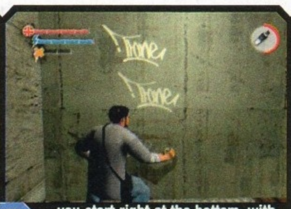


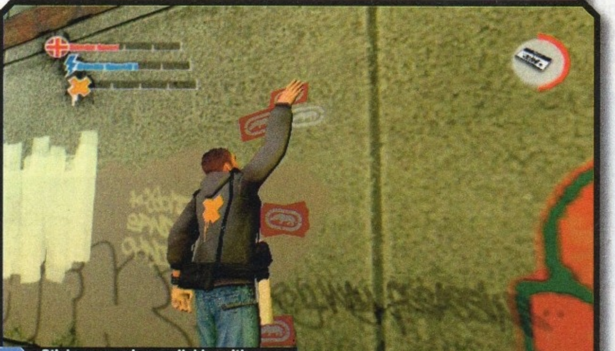
You'll have to stop now and again to shake the spray can.

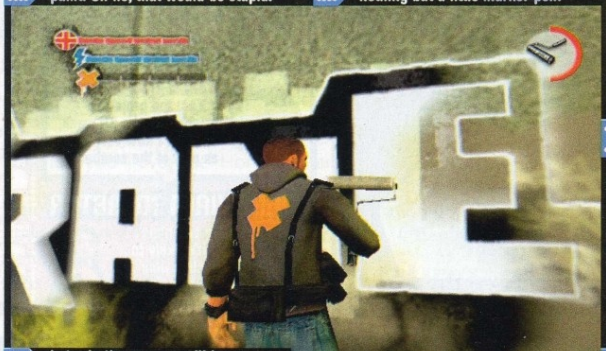
SPRAY 'N' DISPLAY

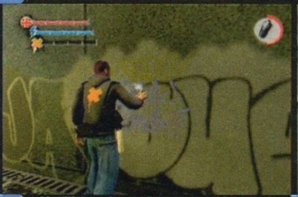
Despite being the basis for the whole game, the graffiti itself can feel clumsy and unsatisfying in practice. Slowly tracing the 'W' shape for graffiti tags in The Warriors feels slicker. There's still plenty to it, though, with a 'black book' to collect snapshots from famed street artists.

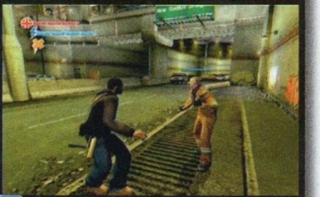

You won't start the game with spray paint. Oh no, that would be stupid.


...you start right at the bottom, with nothing but a little marker pen.


Stickers are also available, with obvious results as seen here.


Later in the game, you'll have access to paint rollers.


You'll be pleased to you you've got access to unlimited spray paint...


...but if a civilian or CCTV camera sees you, you're in for trouble.

MARK ECKO'S GETTING UP: CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE

Is he leaving, or just off to make a cup of tea?

Marc Ecko's never made a videogame before, but he's confident enough about this one that he's willing to put his name to it. Hey, it's a game about graffiti – maybe that's fitting that he'll have his name sprayed over every copy of it. We wouldn't put our names to it, what with all the violence, social unrest, hoodie-wearing thugs and poorly-paid council workers stinking up the futuristic city of New Radius.

You'll play as budding 'fiti grandmaster Trane, who's determined to take over New Radius via the medium of spraying his name onto anything that doesn't move. *Getting Up* is trying to pack a lot of play styles into its width – hand-to-hand combat, stealthing, exploration, busy urban bustles and an affection for the graffiti scene – but it's essential that it all comes together, as we're not too impressed with how the game currently feels.

ART CRIMES

Combat can feel brutal, but it's pretty dull, mostly thanks to enemies attacking in the most basic and predictable of triple-punch combos. There's something strangely cruel about the game's morality, or lack of it, such as kicking the crap out of a lowly construction worker, just because he works for 'the man', all so you can do some drawings on a wall that doesn't even belong to you.

Still, it's not up to us, it's up to Mr Ecko, and we'll have to wait and see whether *Getting Up* can pull itself together into something great.

Need to know

What is it?

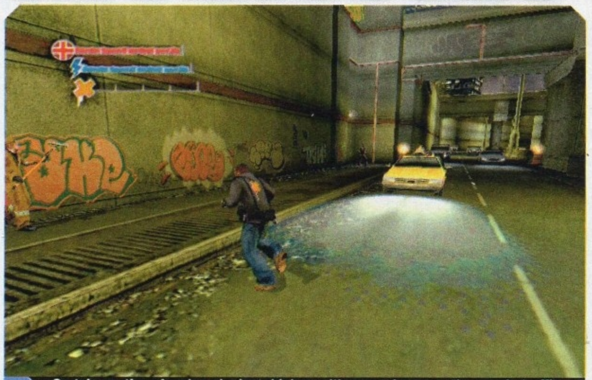
Urban exploration game, centred on underground graffiti artist Trane.

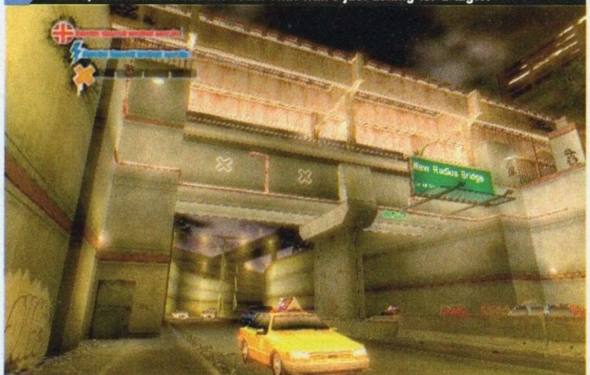
Facts

- **11 levels, each broken down into multiple stages and districts**
- **36 bonus features to unlock**
- **Real-life graffiti legends**

From the people who made...

Indiana Jones And The Emperor's Tomb 71%


Certain sections involve playing chicken with some dangerously speedy traffic flows, in order to cross the road. That wall's just asking for a tag...



Your 'intuition' allows you to see the world in graffiti vision, marking out all nearby tag spots, giving you plenty of opportunities to create masterpieces.

PREVIEWER: Stevie B

HANDS ON VERDICT

MARK ECKO'S GETTING UP: CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE

HOW FINISHED? 90%

CONTROLS

- Ⓐ Jump
- Ⓨ Kick
- Ⓧ Punch
- Ⓑ Dodge
- R Trigger - Graffiti mode
- L Trigger - Block/Stealth
- ● Locate graffiti spots
- ○ Change paint tool

WE PLAYED IT AT...

GM Towers, while wearing some expensively-branded sportswear

WHAT WE PLAYED

- ☑ The opening eight stages
- ☑ Unlocked bonus tunes
- ☑ Set up a HQ in a deserted school

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Weirdly. It's kinda stylish, but it all flows about as smoothly a shopping trolley taking the stairs. The Collective has attempted to create a detailed city, one with some very nice skylines, but, again, we won't know if that effort has paid off until the final game arrives.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Most of the issues are typical preview jitters – with much polishing needed – but there are a *lot* of them.

BEST BIT SO FAR

The freeform challenges – they spring up as you're exploring, asking you to perform a small, quick objective.

VERDICT

5 4 3 2 1

GM LOVES

- + Getting to scramble over and around buildings
- + The quality soundtrack

GM HATES

- - Dull combat compared to *The Warriors*
- - Beating up construction workers

MOST WANTED METER

It feels a little shonky, but there's potential for a dirty urban mix of *Tomb Raider* and *Jet Set Radio*. If it's not whipped into shape, it could stink.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ....The Warriors
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...The Warriors!
OUT SOONER: ....Erm... The... ....Warriors?

OUT: MARCH • **FORMAT:** PSP • **PRICE:** £30.00
• **DEVELOPER:** SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT • **PUBLISHER:** UBISOFT
• **ONLINE:** CO-OP AND VS. • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE • **WEB:** WWW.UNTOLDLEGENDS.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-4

PSP

UNTOLD LEGENDS: THE WARRIOR'S CODE

Bottoms up for another top-down RPG romp...

We're not sure how untold those legends can really be: this is the follow-up to PSP launch title *Untold Legends,* itself related to a whole family of top-down RPG's based on *Champions of Norrath* and the *Baldur's Gate* series. Despite the many upgrades appearing in *Warrior's Code,* it still feels familiar. Still, if it means more good stuff, who are we to complain? If we had to come up with an eleventh commandment, it would be, "Thou shalt give us more good stuff."

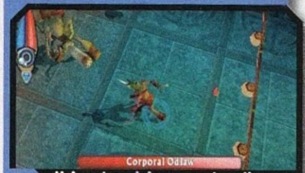
The combat's a little more complex now, meaning that as well as simple to-and-fro hacking and slashing, there's opportunities for well-timed critical hits, as well as blocking and moves that can knock opponents back a fair few feet. Visuals have obviously been polished: even in the opening stage, there's a dizzying collection of metal pipes that stretch off into the depths in the pit beneath your feet. A boss battle has a giant monster clambering up and down these pipes like some shoot 'em up boss bast, instead of just standing still in a room and flinging fireballs.

Warrior's Code is set to be yet another likeable exploit of PSP's graphics bicep. Add in character types that are more interesting than your typical *D&D* line-up, and we're looking forward to getting stuck in to the *Untold Legends* world all over again.

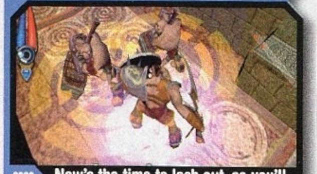
Steve Bailey

ELF RISK

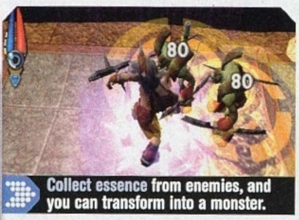
You'll spend most of your quest time in *Warrior's Code* thrashing monsters, but as well as magic and melee attacks, you've got the option of ranged combat. Every character has their own boomstick to shoot things out of, but getting the hang of accessing it (pressing L1 and ◎) feels like an awkward switch to make, and we wish that our firepower felt meatier, hitting with a mighty POW instead of a limping pfft.



He's got a mini-gun – return the favour with your own bullets.



Now's the time to lash out, as you'll do double the damage to your foe.



Collect essence from enemies, and you can transform into a monster.

Need to know

What is it?

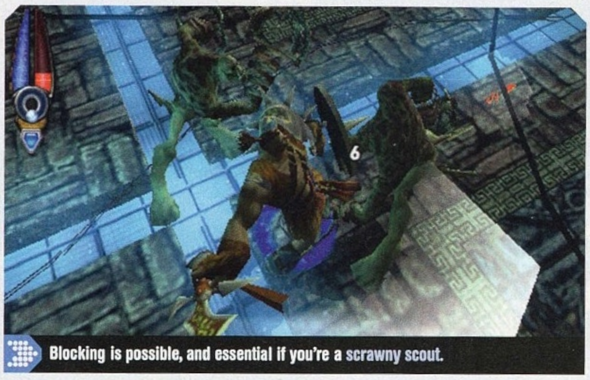
Topdown fantasy RPG, for all your dungeon-ing and dragon-ing needs.

Facts

- 40 unique types of enemy to bludgeon
- Five new character classes to choose from, including Scout and Pilgrim

From the people who made...

Untold Legends.............................76%



Blocking is possible, and essential if you're a scrawny scout.

VERDICT

GM LOVES

- + Hitting things with spells and maces
- + Joining up with three others over WiFi

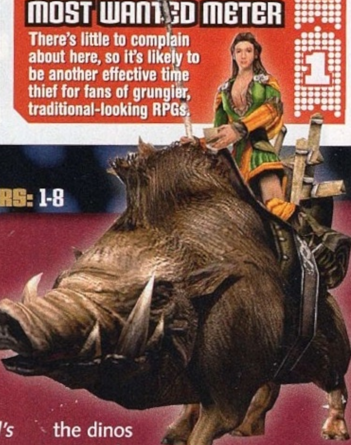
GM HATES

- - That the projectile weapons feel a bit weak, and don't flow very well as part of the combat

MOST WANTED METER

There's little to complain about here, so it's likely to be another effective time thief for fans of grungier, traditional-looking RPGs.

5 4 3 2 1



OUT: 24TH FEB • **FORMAT:** PC • **PRICE:** £34.99 • **DEVELOPER:** SUNFLOWERS
• **PUBLISHER:** DEEP SILVER • **ONLINE:** DEATHMATCH • **OTHER FORMAT:** NONE • **WEB:** WWW.PARA-WORLD.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-8

PC

PARAWORLD

Or *Age of Empires* meets *Jurassic Park*...

Contrary to that ker-azy title, *ParaWorld* isn't actually based on the SAS, the Special Olympics *or* the X-Files. It's actually an RTS with an emphasis on sharp teeth and rank breath…

ParaWorld's real strength stems from the dino factor, which an incredible amount of imagination and silky art skills have obviously gone into. From vicious little raptors, robo scorpions and Pteradons packing rocket launchers to Titans complete with full body armour, they're stunningly animated and beautifully realised. As well as the usual RTS-fare of harvesting food, wood and stone to weapons and buildings, you can level up your dino's armour through five stages by retrieving skulls from fallen foes.

CLAWSOME

RTSs have a tendency to get bogged down with fiddly micromanagement, hence the 'Army Controller' – *ParaWorld's* revolutionary new command system. It displays a hierarchy of your available warriors and workers, all the way down from your party chieftain to humble log gatherers.

Unfortunately, this system restricts you to a mere fifty-two troops, making *ParaWorld's* battles potentially a lot less epic than rivals like *Rome: Total War.* Fingers crossed the majesty of the dinos can make up for this shortfall… Reminding us of those halcyon days of our childhood when we spent our afternoons debating who would win in a scrap between an Allasaurus and a Stegosaurus, we're getting pretty hot under the collar about *ParaWorld.*

Rob Taylor

Need to know

What is it?

Dinosaurs hit the RTS genre head-on with (pre) historic results.

Facts

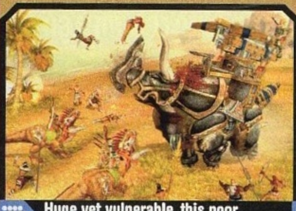
- 16 missions over five perilous terrains
- 50 creatures, 40 of which are dinos
- 9 playable heroes

From the people who made...

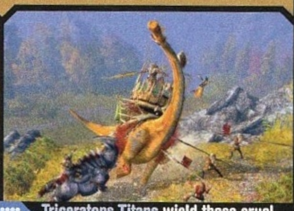
Anno 1503...N/A

HEY THERE, REXY

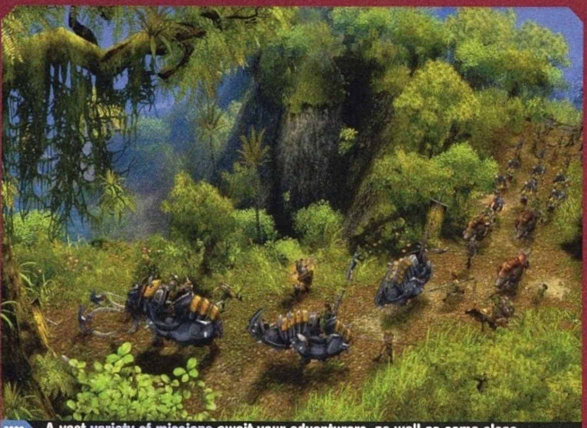
From sabre-toothed tigers through to prehistoric rhinos, woolly mammoths, diplodocuses, triceratops and the king of them all – T-Rex, *ParaWorld* isn't lacking bite on the dino front.



Huge yet vulnerable, this poor Diplodocus meets a gory end.



Triceratops Titans wield these cruel horn blades – stay clear of them.



A vast variety of missions await your adventurers, as well as some close encounters of the prehistoric kind to keep them on their toes…

VERDICT

GM LOVES

- + A narrative overflowing with imagination
- + The three dino Titans. Whoa. Just… whoa

GM HATES

- - Lacks *Age of Empire 3's* depth
- - The Army Controller seems iffy

MOST WANTED METER

Far from a being dino crisis, this inspired spin on the stale real-time strategy genre is guaranteed to be pure dino-mite. Expect good things.

5 4 3 2 1

OUT: MARCH **• FORMAT:** XB 360 **• PRICE:** £44.99 **• DEVELOPER:** RELIC
• PUBLISHER: THQ **• ONLINE:** CO-OP, VERSUS. **• SPECIAL:** MULTI-PLAYER
• OTHER FORMATS: NO **• WEB:** WWW.THEOUTFITGAME.COM **• PLAYERS:** 1-8

The Outfit

There's guns. Lots and lots of guns...

'You're in the Army now, you hear? It's time to blow stuff up and YOU WILL ENJOY IT!' Go anywhere near the offices of Canadian-based coders Relic, and that's all you're likely to hear, as they put the finishing touches on their impressive WW2 shooter, *The Outfit*.

OVER BLOWN

This is a war game, yes, but an accurate representation of WW2 this most certainly isn't. This is the Jerry Bruckheimer version, the nitro-fed turbo edition, the most intensely exciting strategic frag-fest you'll ever see. Honest.

Choosing from three playable heroes – each with their own specialist area (Hand-to-hand combat, Heavy arms and Anti-tank), you lead a squad of soldiers on a variety of missions ranging from reconnaissance and rescue to search and destroy, wreaking havoc along the way. Everything in *The Outfit* can be destroyed. Everything – from houses, cars, trains to fences, bunkers, trees and bridges. Then there's a ton of enemies all at your mercy, and Relic have done their best to make sure the action never lets up.

'Destruction on Demand' is what they call it, and it really is just that. At any point during the game you're able to purchase 'reinforcements'.

These could be anything from extra troops, to gun emplacements or tanks – and in true 'Hollywood' style the items are flown in, direct to your location and dropped from the sky... instantly.

War has never been so gorgeous. Just look at those flame effects!

BIG BUDGET

Imagine the thrill of fighting on an ever changing battlefield, or the panic as you corner enemy troops just as they order a tank to land right in front of you, and you're half way to imagining the thrill of *The Outfit*. This is a game that assaults you from all angles right from the word go – and just doesn't know when to quit. From what we've seen so far, it's safe to say we can expect *The Outfit* to suit us perfectly.

Need to know

What is it?

A completely over-the-top, third person WW2 action shooter.

Facts

- **Stars *Hellboy* actor Ron Perlman, as one of our heroes**
- ***The Outfit* was once a 'serious' strategy game *a la Full Spectrum Warrior***

Rumour

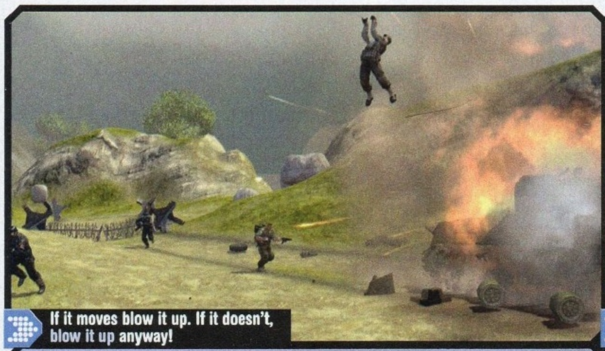
- ***The Outfit 2* may be on its way.**

From the people who made...

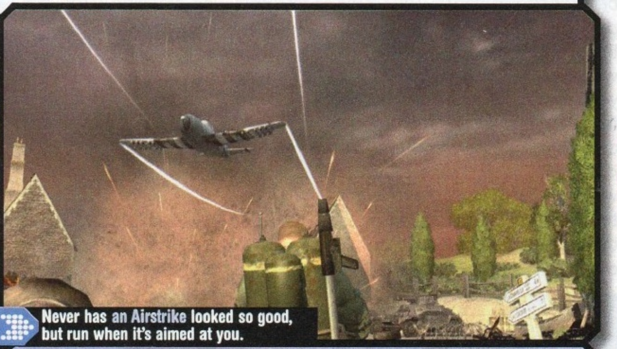
Warhammer 40,000 PC 90%

CRASH, BOOM, BANG!

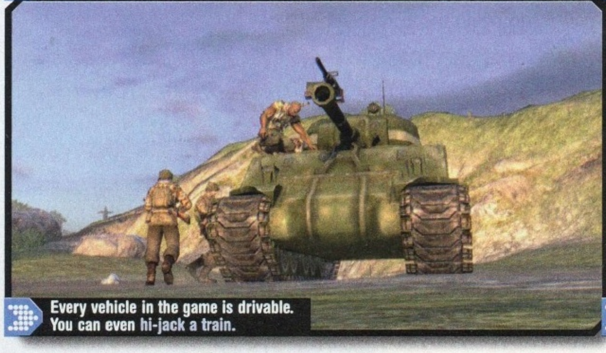
No military consultants were harmed in the making of this game. Come to think of it... none were even spoken to. But still, the explosions are so impressive and frequent, that any inaccuracies just seem like nit-picking...



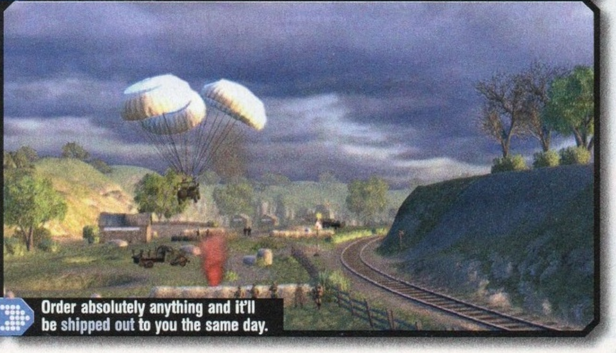
If it moves blow it up. If it doesn't, blow it up anyway!



Never has an Airstrike looked so good, but run when it's aimed at you.



Every vehicle in the game is drivable. You can even hi-jack a train.



Order absolutely anything and it'll be shipped out to you the same day.

PREVIEWER: Mike

HANDS ON VERDICT

The Outfit

HOW FINISHED?

CONTROLS

- Ⓐ Jump/Melee
- Ⓨ Destruction on demand
- Ⓧ Reload
- R Fire
- L Grenade
- R Ⓑ Run
- L Ⓑ Change weapons

WE PLAYED IT AT...

Relic's studios in Vancouver, Canada.

WHAT WE PLAYED

- ☑ Various single player missions
- ☑ Multi-player
- ☑ Co-op

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Strategic and squad-based this may be, but it plays far more like *Halo 2* than *Ghost Recon*, with it's emphasis on action and easy-to-pick-up control system. Executing the 'Destruction on Demand' commands is fast, meaning you're never taken out of the action.

ANY PROBLEMS?

With so much going on at once, we did notice a slight bit of slow down – something we hope won't be in the final game.

BEST BIT SO FAR

The amount of damage caused by an Air Strike is amazing. Order one in, sit back, and enjoy the fireworks.

VERDICT

5
4
3
2
1

GM LOVES

- + Blowing up everything we can see
- + The vehicles. Especially the wheelbarrow!

GM HATES

- - Slowdown when there's too much on screen
- - Should have been a launch game

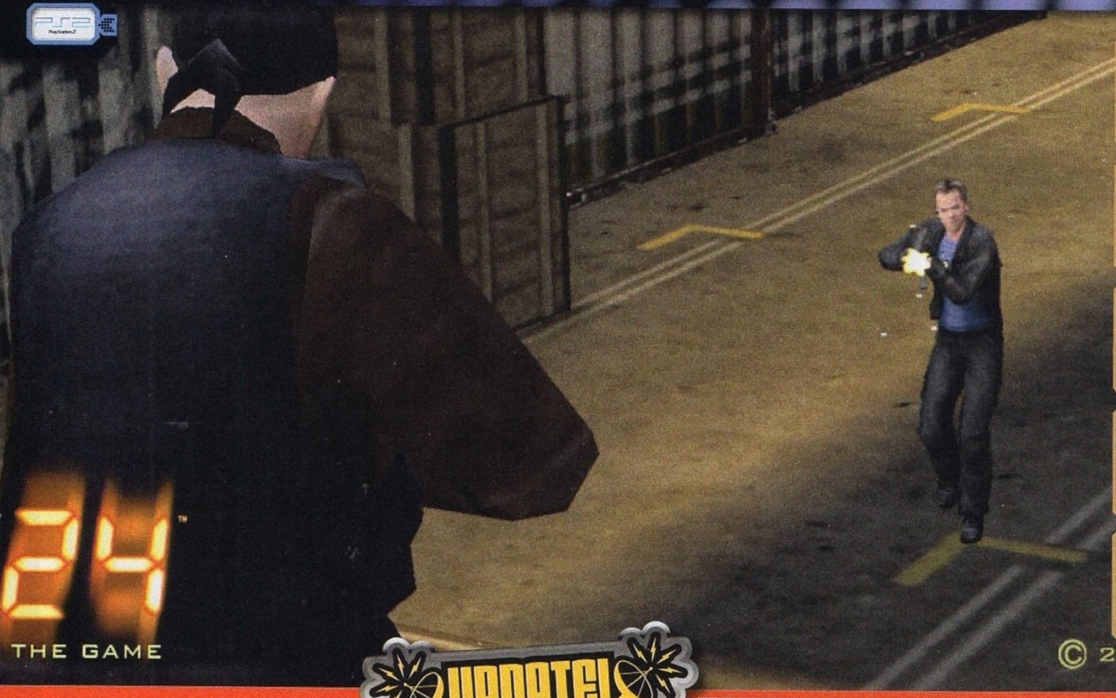
MOST WANTED METER

Playing this is like being trapped in the final scene of the biggest action movie you've ever seen. Expect *The Outfit* to completely blow you away.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ....Mercenaries
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Call of Duty 2

• OUT: MARCH • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99
• DEVELOPER: STUDIO CAMBRIDGE • PUBLISHER: SONY • ONLINE: NO
• OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: HTTP://WWW.24THEGAME.COM/ • PLAYERS: 1



LET'S SPLIT

The split-screen device is more than just a visual thing – it highlights useful objects and places of interest.

WORK IT OUT

Working with other characters is key to success. If Jack is up against snipers, CTU will send details of their location to his GPS.

TIME LINE

Jack is not only battling terrorists, but also the clock. With a mere 24 hours to save the world, you've no time to faff around.

GUN IN THE SUN

The game is set in Los Angeles, which gives it a nice modern feel. Certainly makes a change from muddy wartime France.

STRESSED

As in the TV show, the stress often gets to Jack. Hostage situations don't help; sometimes enemies use civillians as shields.

UPDATE!

WE GET FIRST HANDS ON WITH THE GAME OF THE DAY-LONG TV SERIES

24: THE GAME

Get ready for the longest day of your life...

Need to know

What is it?

The first official game based on the fantastic Fox TV series, *24*.

Facts

- The story is approved by the show's writers
- Takes place between series 3 and series 4 of the show
- Stars Radio One DJ Chris Moyles

From the people who made...

Primal	N/A
Medievil 2	77%

DRIVE TIME

Driving sections between missions add interest. One particularly exciting example involves Jack chasing a van full of terrorists through Los Angeles during rush hour.

The game takes place over a 24 hour period; here it's night-time.

Here's the Los Angeles storm drains, as seen in *Terminator 2*.

When it comes to 24, people fall into two categories. There are people who watch it and automatically become detail-obsessed fans, aware of every intricacy from plot to characters to setting. Then there are people who don't watch it. There are no in-betweens, such is the genius of the show.

The constant tension that makes the show so gripping has been translated to *24: The Game* perfectly. The tagline is "Be Jack Bauer", and as far as your PS2 will allow, you *can* be. And if you're a fan, expect every base to be covered. This is no lazy cash-in – absolutely everyone involved in the TV series, from writers, producers and directors to musicians and actors, have lent their talents to its production, ensuring insane authenticity throughout. Everything down to the clothes the characters wear has been approved by the people at Fox. But what if you *don't* like the show?

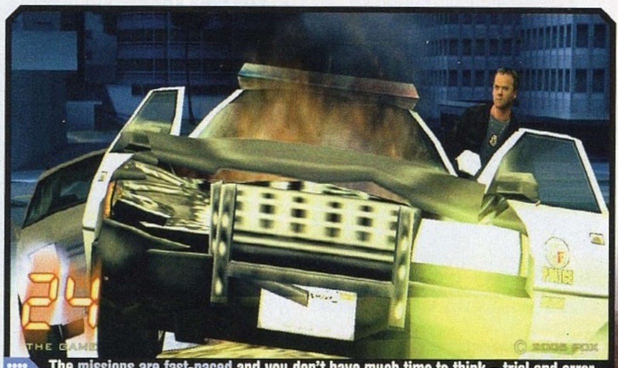
Well, then it's an extremely decent action game. It draws comparisons with *The Getaway*, but unlike Sony's mockney gangster epic, it's actually fun to play. It's a traditional third-person action/adventure with the emphasis placed squarely on running around shooting terrorists with machine-guns.

VARIETY SHOW

The targeting system is particularly interesting – much like Free Radical's *Second Sight*, locking on to an enemy reveals a large target area within which you can aim a smaller reticule to aim at specific body parts.

It's super clever, and you can crash through a room systematically popping off guards like you're the world's best marksman. It might be a little easy at times, but it sure is satisfying. And makes you look better than you are.

There are also driving sections to contend with. These range from semi-free-roaming cruises through Los Angeles to fast-paced rally-style sections through dark country roads in Jack's massive gas-guzzling SUV.

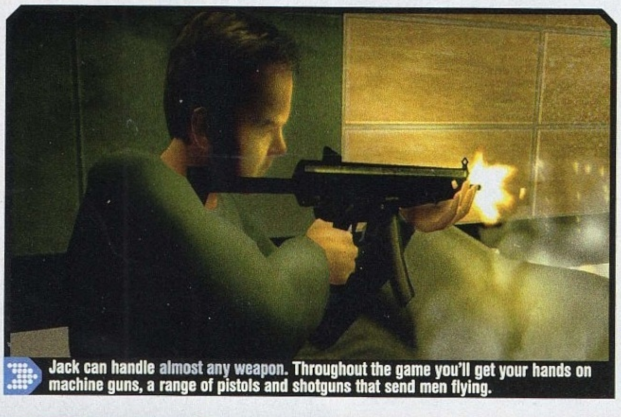


The missions are fast-paced and you don't have much time to think – trial and error is your friend. Mess your car up and you'll be in deep trouble, though.

Also keeping things fresh are small puzzle sections – defusing bombs, hacking into enemy computers etc. – that use simple 2D interfaces and are genuinely quite addictive. Other levels include *Silent Scope*-style sniping sections and stealth missions. So plenty of variety then, although most of the game is straight-up shooting.

24 is one of the most faithful TV show conversions we've ever come across, and not a bad game either. If you consider yourself a *24* fan, there's every chance this could be an essential purchase.

Otherwise, it's a quality shooter with amazing cutscenes that really feels like a big-budget American TV show. Oh, and Chris Moyles is in it, and you get to beat him up. Bonus.

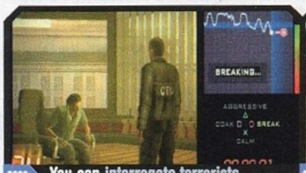


Jack can handle almost any weapon. Throughout the game you'll get your hands on machine guns, a range of pistols and shotguns that send men flying.

> "CHRIS MOYLES IS IN IT, AND YOU GET TO BEAT HIM UP. BONUS"

TRUE TO LIFE

Even if you've never seen *24*, you'll be aware of the famous split-screen scenes and the ominous orange ticking clock. From these obvious additions to tiny incidental details, this is a game so steeped in authenticity it may as well be another episode of the series.

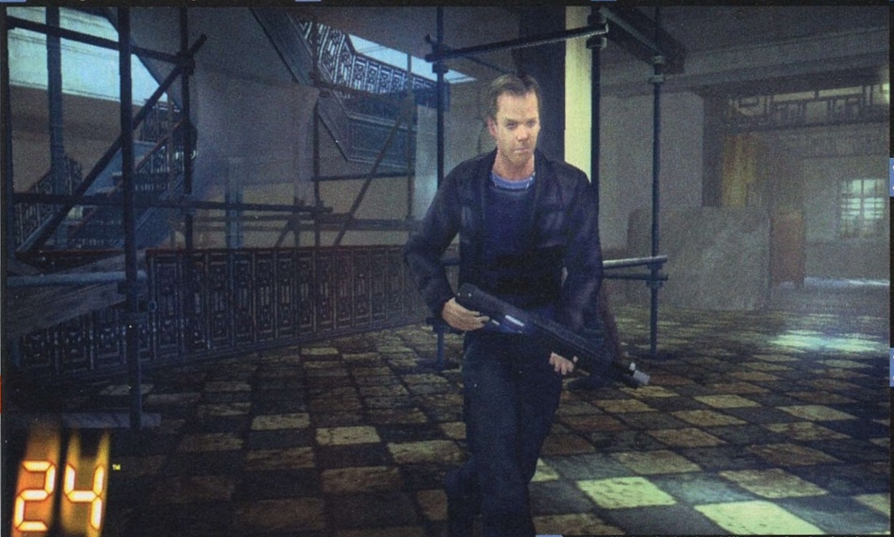


You can interrogate terrorists through this intuitive system.

Sneaking through enemy bases comes with the pressure of a time limit.

Much like *The Getaway*, using cover is important to your survival.

Thanks to the physics, stuff goes flying all over the levels.



The Kiefer Sutherland likeness is absolutely spot-on, as are all the stars of the show's.

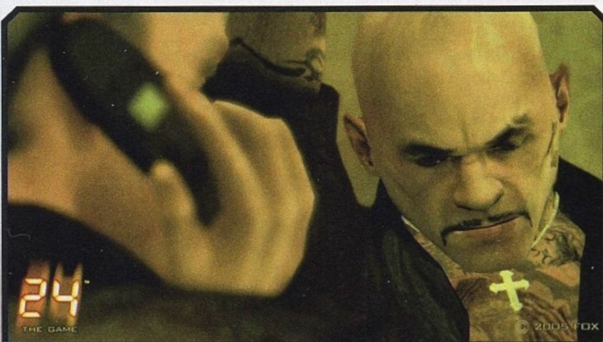
Some missions combine both driving and on-foot sections.

You'll have to take down helicopters, which requires some lateral thinking.

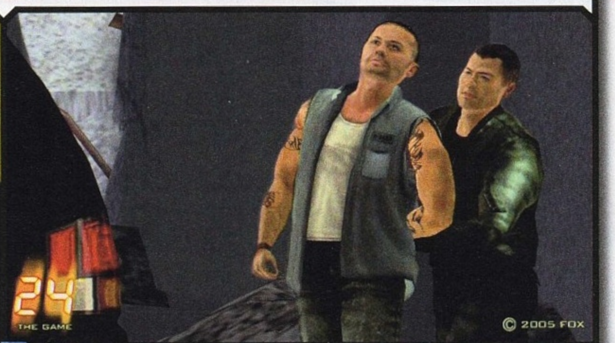
You get to play as other characters in the game, like Tony Almeida here.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, TRACTION

Every cutscene in the game has been created in the same way as the TV show. Storyboards are drawn up then the action is directed via motion capture footage and the in-game engine. Higher resolution character models are used in the cutscenes and it all looks amazing.



The stars of the show lent their voices to the cutscenes. Their faces were recorded on video and recreated in-game, so it all looks great.



There are nasty terrorists by the dozen, including one with the likeness of *24* fan Chris Moyles. Yes, that's right. Chris Moyles is in the *24* game.

In some missions you have a squad backing you up for extra firepower.

The driving sections are good, but still need some work and polish.

Here's the famous split screen from the TV show in action.

A lot can happen in 24 hours. Massive explosions for example.

ALL IN THE DETAILS

As this is based on a TV series, fans of the show will already be familiar with the particular quirks of each of the characters. So to give the characters, well, character, the developers have added individual traits to their facial and movement animations. For example, if you're behind cover during a battle with a helicopter, you'll see your character readying himself to pop out and fire, closing his eyes, taking a deep breath and genuinely looking terrified, as you would be. A genius touch.

Take down a chopper by aiming at its rotors. This is simple to do, thanks to the good aiming system.

This is Jack's colleague, Tony Almeida. He's just as handy with a rifle as Jack is, but not as cool.

Every mission we played seemed really short. Maybe we're just utterly brilliant at the game.

PREVIEWER: Andy

HANDS ON VERDICT

24 THE GAME

HOW FINISHED?

CONTROLS

L1 Aim
L2 Switch weapons
R1 Fire
R2 Take cover
⊗ Activate
◎ Reload
△ Melee

WE PLAYED IT AT...

Sony HQ, London

WHAT WE PLAYED

- ☑ Seven single-player missions
- ☑ New driving sections,
- ☑ Mid-mission puzzles,
- ☑ On-foot sections

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

The targeting system is amazingly user-friendly and the whole thing feels solid and polished. It seemed fairly near to completion, but there were a few bugs here and there that will no doubt be sorted out before the game is released.

ANY PROBLEMS?

The driving sections were fun, but we reckon the handling needs tweaked a little – it feels a bit floaty and weird, and you never seem to roll over.

BEST BIT SO FAR

The physics can make shooting sections a lot of fun. Stuff topples and flies around the level, making it really feel alive.

VERDICT

5
4
3
2
1

GM LOVES

+ It's just like playing an episode of the TV show
+ Jack Bauer is one of the coolest men ever

GM HATES

- Some of the missions seem very short
- The driving sections need some work

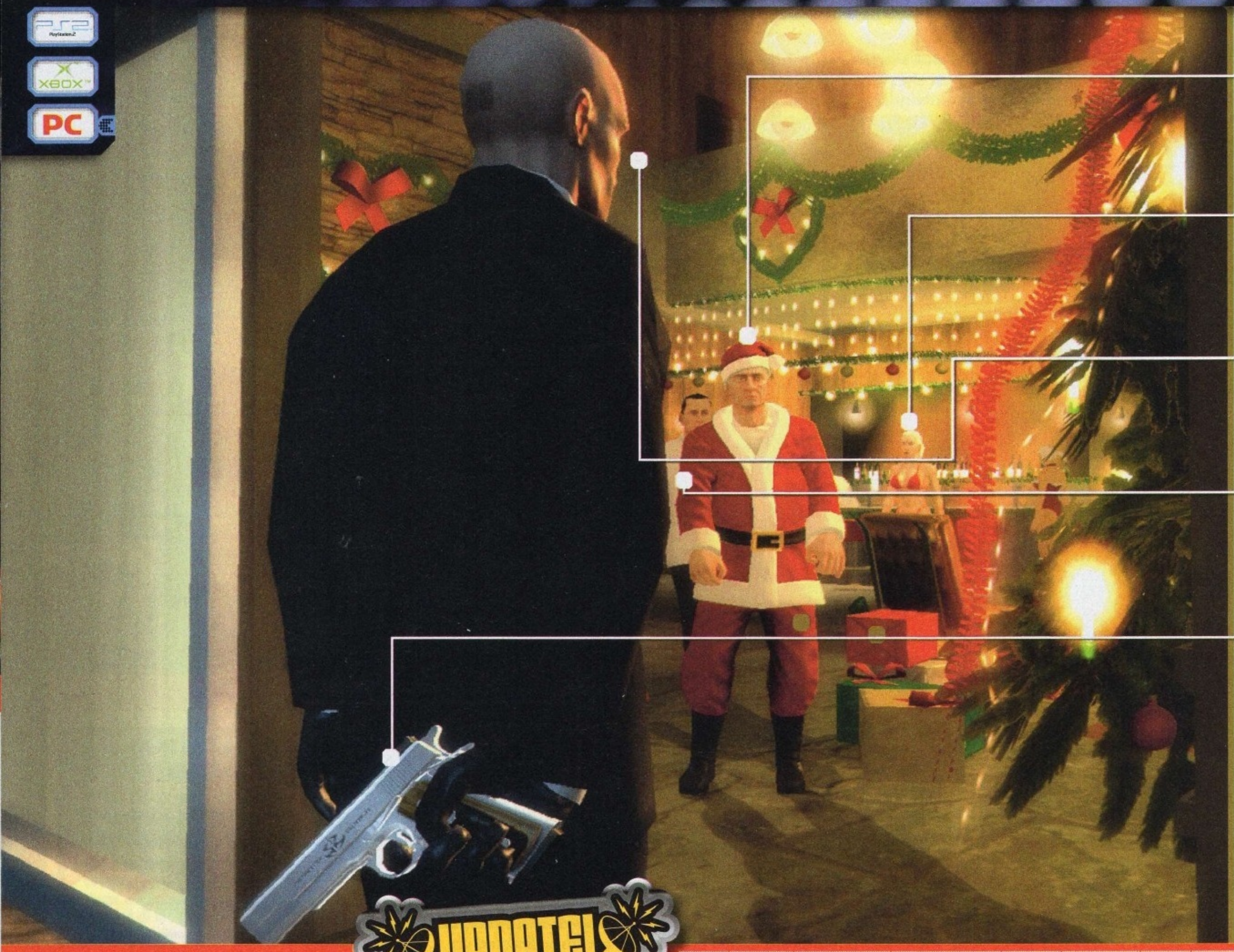
MOST WANTED METER

Both fans of the show and newcomers alike will find something to enjoy in this very cool action game. It could even be better than the actual show.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: The Getaway
BIGGEST RIVAL: The Godfather
OUT SOONER: SOCOM 3, February

- **OUT:** 24TH FEBRUARY
- **FORMAT:** PC
- **PRICE:** £24.99
- **DEVELOPER:** IO INTERACTIVE
- **PUBLISHER:** EIDOS
- **ONLINE:** RANKINGS
- **OTHER FORMATS:** PS2, XB
- **WEB:** WWW.HITMAN.COM
- **PLAYERS:** 1



HO HO ARGH!

Everyone just loves Father Christmas, except 47 that is. He's not interested in mince pies or reindeer – just cold, hard cash. We think he's eyeing up your costume, though, Santa…

DUMB BLONDE

If asexual baldie 47 *is* attracted to the female of the species, he doesn't exactly let on. In fact, the only kind of kiss these ladies are likely to receive from him is a Glaswegian one.

HITMANIA

As cold and calculating as ever, heartless 47 is the antithesis of suave, personable James Bond types. To this genetically engineered slaphead, killing is a profitable business.

WAITER MINUTE

Some civilians can be pumped for info. Make sure to learn as much about your targets as possible before moving in for the kill – you might just make it out of there in one piece.

GUNHED

Having cash to splash means 47 has delved into the world of customisable weaponry for *Blood Money*. Items such as Silverballers, and W2000 sniper rifles are all on the menu.

UPDATE!

TWO MORE VICIOUS MISSIONS THIS MONTH FOR LUCKY *GM*...

HITMAN

BLOOD MONEY

Earned in blood, just the way 47 likes it…

Need to know

What is it?

Barcode Head's fourth foray into the murky world of contract killing.

Facts

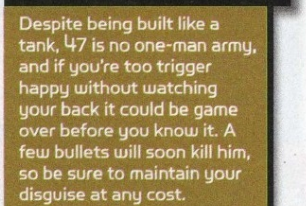
- Blow 47's cash on weapons, upgrades and flashy new costumes!
- Distract witnesses, arrange 'accidents' and use civvies as human shields

From the people who made...

Hitman: Contracts	84%
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	86%

HIT ME

Despite being built like a tank, 47 is no one-man army, and if you're too trigger happy without watching your back it could be game over before you know it. A few bullets will soon kill him, so be sure to maintain your disguise at any cost.



Don't leave yourself exposed as villains lurk in the shadows.

Here's 47's new 'human shield' manoeuvre in action.

Possibilities. A word full of enigmatic promise tinged with a hint of disappointment. It's also the perfect word to summarise Eidos's phenomenally successful *Hitman* series. With a world of infinite… um, possibilities, it rewards sick imaginations and a flair for killing.

GamesMaster was lucky enough to spend a few hours skulking through two fresh missions this month. First up was a visit to the opera to catch a performance of Tosca and wipe out a diplomat and a performer after the encore. An abundance of options present themselves: substitute the prop gun for a real one? Kill a co-actor and get in close? Simply charge in all guns blazing? Tough choices…

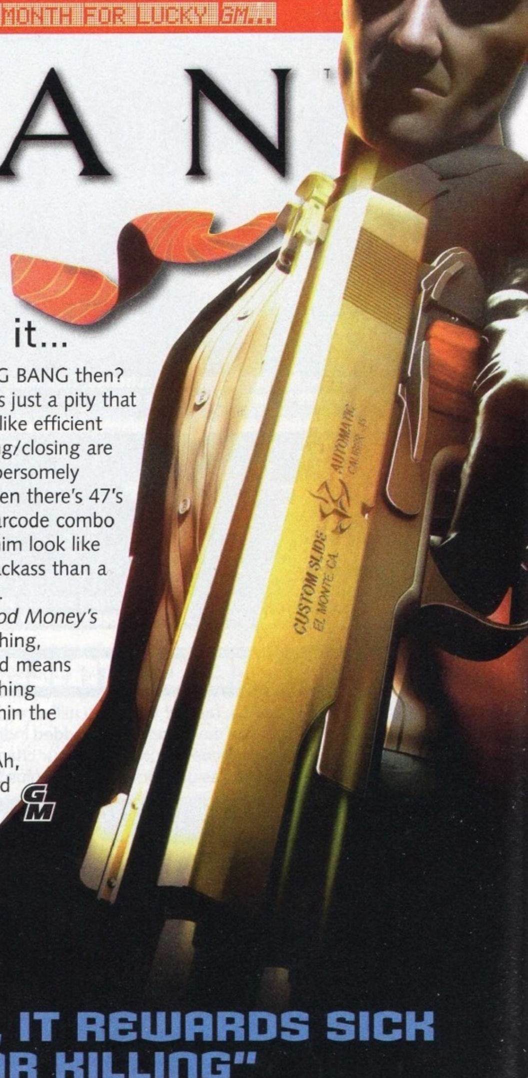
Next on the agenda was a trip to a Hugh Hefner-alike's snow resort to erase said porn baron, silence his lecherous son and reclaim an incriminating videotape. With lingerie models, lecherous Father Christmases, camp photographers, killer bodyguards and hyperactive chihuahuas to contend with, this mission is anything but innocent festive fun.

CUSTOM KILLS

Of course, the new notoriety factor means blundering around like Inspector Clouseau will attract levels of attention that range from suspicious glances to full-on Wanted posters. But then *Hitman* has never just been about results; it's about style. To this end, *Blood Money* will offer online rankings including 'most accidents' and 'silent assassin' to encourage textbook mission run-throughs.

So, *Hitman* is definitely back with a BANG BANG then? Almost… it's just a pity that vital details like efficient door opening/closing are still so cumbersomely handled. Then there's 47's slaphead/barcode combo – it makes him look like more of a jackass than a mean jackal.

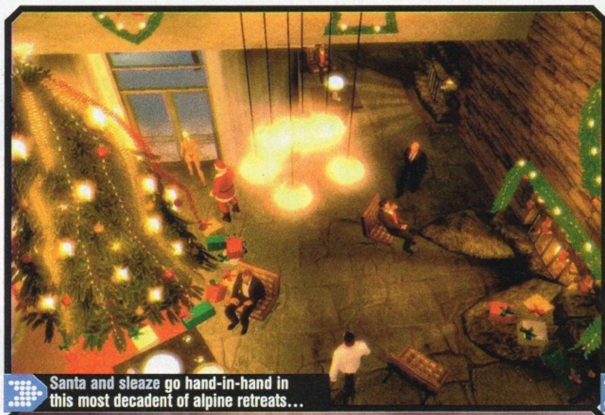
Still, *Blood Money's* living, breathing, violent world means almost anything remains within the realm of possibility. Ah, it's that word again… GM

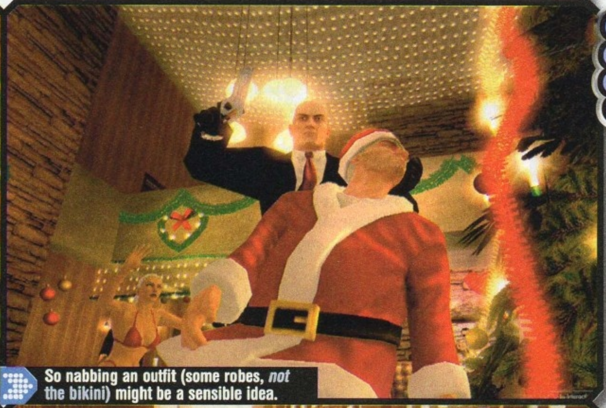


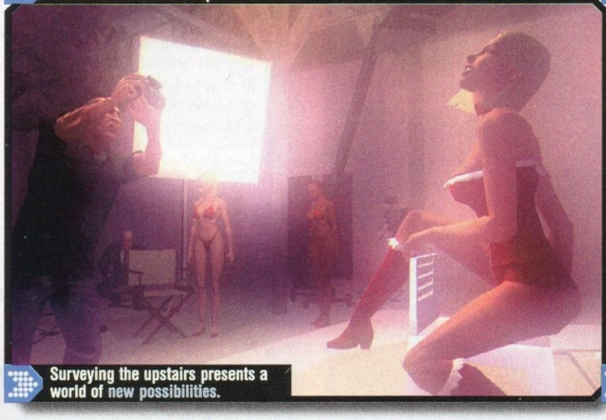
> "WITH INFINITE POSSIBILITIES, IT REWARDS SICK IMAGINATIONS AND A FLAIR FOR KILLING"

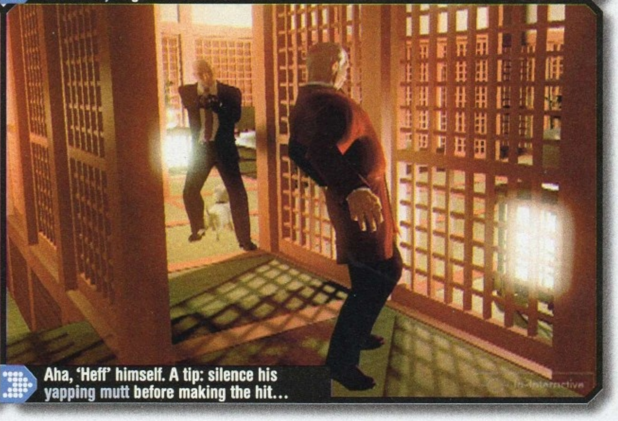
XXX-MAS

Even 47's shiny chrome dome can't compete with the vast amounts of bare flesh on display in *Blood Money's* eminently entertaining 'porn baron' mission. As always in *Hitman*, the real fun lies in figuring out your own unique way to complete a hit, but here's a hint: before the mission begins, take care *not* to select any weaponry – you're going to have to pass a metal detector test to get past the heavies at the door. Funnily enough, security don't take kindly to baldies packing machine pistols, but a heat-free hitman can slip straight in. Once inside, zero in on any bodyguard and – hey presto! – 47's got himself a gun again.


Santa and sleaze go hand-in-hand in this most decadent of alpine retreats...

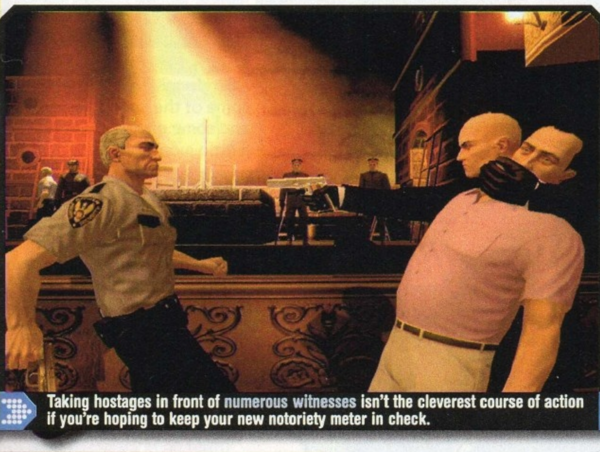

So nabbing an outfit (some robes, *not* the bikini) might be a sensible idea.

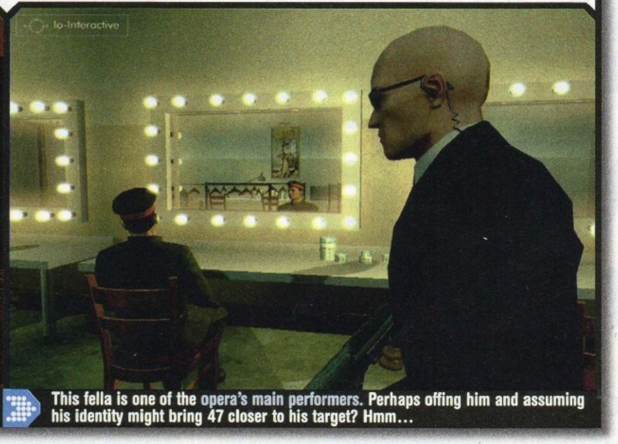

Surveying the upstairs presents a world of new possibilities.


Aha, 'Heff' himself. A tip: silence his yapping mutt before making the hit...

KILLER CARRERAS

By gatecrashing the opera in his quest for kills, 47 is spoilt for choice. Innocent tourists, bumbling security guards, feeble tour guides and hapless workmen are all milling around. Hmm... who's first on our list? A tip to get you started: head to the cloakroom to receive your – yep you've guessed it – coat, then rummage through the pockets to discover an authentic pistol that looks remarkably similar to a prop the actors are using in rehearsals. Got any ideas yet? We'll let you take it from there...

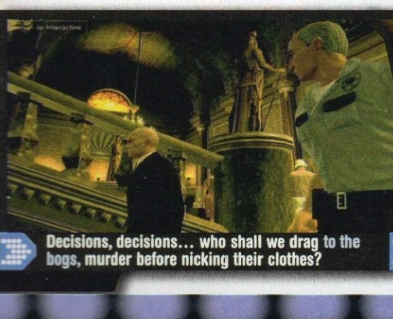

Taking hostages in front of numerous witnesses isn't the cleverest course of action if you're hoping to keep your new notoriety meter in check.

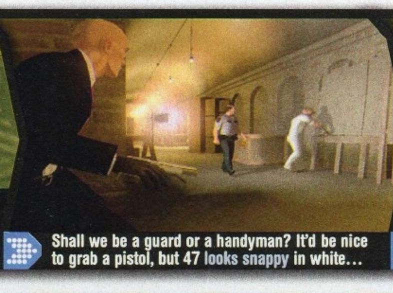


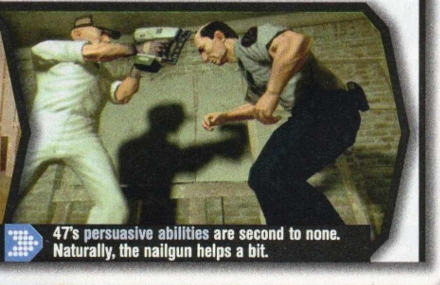
This fella is one of the opera's main performers. Perhaps offing him and assuming his identity might bring 47 closer to his target? Hmm...

THE OUTFIT

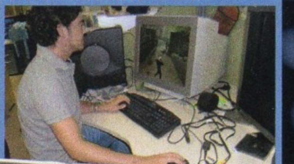
47's silky Armani suit might be a highly desirable fashion statement, but it's not exactly conducive to blending in with the natives. Therefore it's necessary from time to time to 'borrow' a temporary disguise. *Blood Money* offers a wealth of potential victims, with each one having their own advantages and disadvantages. Through the very same magic that means Clark Kent is never rumbled when he becomes Superman, 47 will often gain access to previously unreachable locations while attracting no suspicious glances whatsoever. Clever fella...


Decisions, decisions... who shall we drag to the bogs, murder before nicking their clothes?


Shall we be a guard or a handyman? It'd be nice to grab a pistol, but 47 looks snappy in white...


47's persuasive abilities are second to none. Naturally, the nailgun helps a bit.

PREVIEWER: Rob



HANDS ON VERDICT

HITMAN
BLOOD MONEY

HOW FINISHED?

CONTROLS
Left mouse – Fire
Right mouse – Draw/Hide Weapon/Inventory
Shift – Run
E – Use/Drag
M – Map
F – Pick up/Drop briefcase
Space – Swap clothes

WE PLAYED IT AT...
GM Towers

WHAT WE PLAYED
☑ Opera mission
☑ Alpine Ledge mission

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

It's the *Hitman* we all know and love, but refined (tarted up) a little. Deviously plotting the downfall of your victims and executing your plan to perfection remains a deliciously satisfying experience.

ANY PROBLEMS?

The series' infamously fiddly controls still rear their ugly head, meaning even the most elaborately-orchestrated hit can turn to mush in seconds through little fault of your own.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Shooting the glass bottom out of a jacuzzi full of busty babes and watching the revellers plunge hundreds of feet to an icy death. Brrr... nasty!

VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Executing yapping canines
+ Stowing Santa's corpse

GM HATES
- Clunky controls
- We can't help but feel that Blood Money remains *gimmicky*

MOST WANTED METER

More imaginative... and sicker than ever before, this *Hitman* looks set to blow us away. 47 is the magic number.

5
4
3
2
1

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: ...Hitman: Contracts
BIGGEST RIVAL: ....Splinter ....Cell Chaos Theory

- OUT: FEBRUARY • FORMAT: XB • PRICE: £39.99
- DEVELOPER: WIDELOAD GAMES • PUBLISHER: THQ • ONLINE: NO
- OTHER FORMATS: PC • WEB: WWW.STUBBSTHEZOMBIE.COM • PLAYERS: 1-2

XBOX

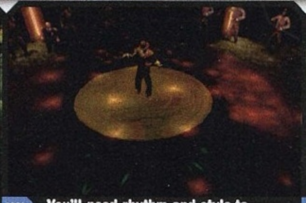
PC

HALO OLD FRIEND

You'll get to use a whole host of vehicles from tanks to jeeps – and they handle rather like a Warthog from the *Halo* series.

Proof that smoking is no good for you skin, not that zombie's are bothered.

Stubbs has an unquenchable thirst for human blood and brains.


You'll need rhythm and style to complete the dance mini-games.

Old MacDonald had a farm. Until we ate him whole.

RETRO DEFECTIVE

The founder of 1950's super-town Punchbowl is the world's richest man who used an ex-Nazi scientist to make his perfect vision of the future. Except, everything's not quite perfect, as you'll quickly find out when you step into the weird world of this town...

RoboGuide will introduce you to the many attractions of Punchbowl.

And you thought Borstal was supposed to be tough.

Grab your mate – the two player co-op is a real highlight.

Press Y to exit sod-o-mobile
The sod-o-mobile helps you move faster than the average Zombie

The hand cam helps you possess other humans when necessary.

Stubbs the Zombie will literally make you throw your guts at people.

STUBBS THE ZOMBIE IN Rebel Without a Pulse

He's drop dead gruesome, you know...

When was the last time a rabbit started a war? Can you think of any giraffe that's contributed to global warming? Exactly – it's always the pesky humans. And now it's time for revenge, and zombies are just the ones for the job.

Your target is Punchbowl – a town of the future, where Robots post the mail, cars hover about and everyone is happy, smiley and friendly. Until you turn up. You see, you're the mighty Stubbs – a chain smoking, green-skinned, zombie with a deadly flatulence problem and skin that an industrial sized vat of Nivea wouldn't sort out. The story, like Stubbs, is on the thin side – you simply chomp and maim your way through as many inhabitants of the town as you can

BRAIN DEAD

You're equipped with some rather nasty attacks to help you. You can release a deadly fart that stuns enemies, use your exploding guts like a hand grenade and even use a decapitated hand to possess unsuspecting homo sapiens.

Once you've chewed on a human's brain, they become one of your own – a flesh eating zombie who'll follow you around and attack anyone they can see in sight. How handy.

This is a zombie game with its rancid tongue firmly in its rotting cheek – you'll get to rip off people's arms before smacking them around the face with it and some of the dialogue is hilarious. Gameplay is a bit of a no-brainer, but this is a top laugh at its most tasteless. GM

Need to know

What is it?

A comedy zombie action game from the brains of the original *Halo* team.

Facts

- Two-player co-op play
- Surprisingly, it's built on the *Halo* engine!

From the people who made...

Halo 96%
Myth 80%

PREVIEWER: Peter

HANDS ON VERDICT

STUBBS THE ZOMBIE IN Rebel Without a Pulse

HOW FINISHED? 80%

CONTROLS

Ⓐ Jump
Ⓨ Eat brains
Ⓧ Lunge attack
Ⓑ Fart attack
L click - Crouch
● Hand attack
○ Bowling ball attack

WE PLAYED IT IN...

GM's secret gaming lair.

WHAT WE PLAYED

☑ Hover vehicles
☑ Used head as a bowling ball
☑ Sucked people's brains
☑ Terrified mad scientists

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

This zombie action game isn't scary like you'd expect, but has the same feel and sense of humour as that other humanoid hater, *Destroy All Humans!* Sucking the brains out of innocent civilians has never been funnier.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Stubbs, being a zombie, feels very sluggish compared to some of the speedy enemies and some environments can be a little monotonous.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Assembling a huge army of the undead who lumber around behind you, wolfing down the brains of Punchbowl's citizens!

VERDICT

5 4 3 2 1

GM LOVES

- + Stubb's brilliant comedy stylings
- + The gloriously bloody action

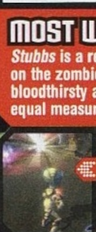
GM HATES

- - Some of the environments are dull
- - An almost total lack of storyline

MOST WANTED METER

Stubbs is a refreshingly humorous take on the zombie genre, delivering bloodthirsty action and big laughs in equal measure.

CAN'T WAIT?



MOST LIKE: ...Destroy All Humans!
BIGGEST RIVAL: ....Dead Rising
OUT SOONER: ....Resident Evil 4, out now

- **OUT:** FEBRUARY • **FORMAT:** PSP • **PRICE:** £29.99
- **DEVELOPER:** TEAM 17 • **PUBLISHER:** SONY • **WIFI:** LEVEL SHARING
- **SPECIAL:** LEVEL EDITOR • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE • **WEB:** WWW.YOUR PSP.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1

PSP

Lemmings

They're just dying to get onto the PSP…

Need to know

What is it?

The classic 2D suicidal rodent herding puzzle game resurrected for the PSP.

Facts

- Over 100 levels
- Level editor that allows you to design your own
- Five different level themes

From the people who made...

Worms Blast	69%

While the DS wows gamers by offering unique gaming experience like *Trauma Centre* and *Nintendogs*, the PSP is going for the more tried-and-tested approach. And by tried and tested, we mean old and familiar.

For every original game like *Mercury*, you get numerous PS2 clones such as *Kong*, *FIFA* and *NFS*. Then there's the old games that are having the dust blown from them and asked to dance for the new handheld, such as *MediEvil*, *Everybody's Golf* and now *Lemmings*.

Of course, the release of *Lemmings* isn't supposed to pushing the envelope in terms of gameplay. Instead the reason why it has returned is because its neatly portioned brain tickling puzzles suit the nature of handheld gaming perfectly.

This PSP version has over 100 levels to guide your Lemmings through. And if that wasn't enough, for the first time ever there's a level editor so you can design your own and then share with mate using WiFi.

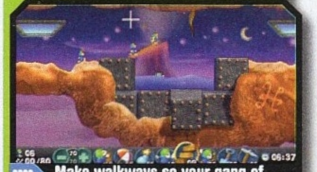
LEAP OF FATE

Lemmings was absolutely huge in the early nineties and has sold over 5 millions copies in its various guises, so we expect this to be successful. And also expect it to be exactly the same game as it's always been.

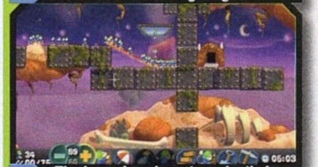
Dave Harrison

SUICIDAL

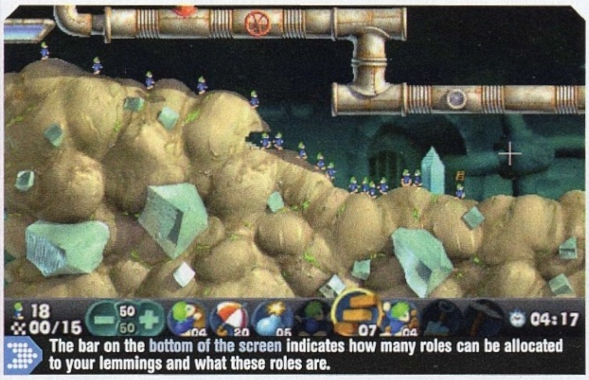
The objective of the game is to a guide a troop of suicidal lemmings through a level riddled with hazards and danger. To do this, you must appoint different roles to the lemmings to dig, block, climb or float so that they navigate the obstacles and trudge towards the exit.



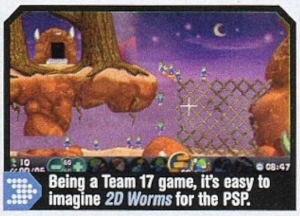
Make walkways so your gang of rodents can reach higher ground.



The Lemmings have to make their way to the one exit in the level.



The bar on the bottom of the screen indicates how many roles can be allocated to your lemmings and what these roles are.



Being a Team 17 game, it's easy to imagine *2D Worms* for the PSP.

VERDICT

GM LOVES

- + *Lemmings*, it's a great puzzle game
- + The fact you can design your own levels

GM HATES

- – Another port for the PSP
- – The strange smocks the Lemmings wear

MOST WANTED METER

There's no doubting that *Lemmings* is perfect for the PSP and hopefully it will entertain and amuse a new generation of gamers.

5 4 3 2 1

- **OUT:** NOW (US) TBC (UK) • **FORMAT:** PS2 • **PRICE:** £45 (GAME AND GUITARS BUNDLE) • **DEVELOPER:** HARMONIX • **PUBLISHER:** TBC
- **ONLINE:** NO • **SPECIAL:** GUITAR CONTROLLER • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE • **WEB:** WWW.PLAYSTATION.CO.UK • **PLAYERS:** 1-2

PS2

GUITAR HERO

The game that's got an axe to grind…

Before we start enthusing about this game, we must point out that it hasn't got a UK release date. Despite its success in the US where it is being published by Sony, there's no news as to when or even if we'll be able get our hands on it – which is a huge shame as *Guitar Hero* is superb.

The development team responsible for *GH* is Harmonix who came up with the *Amplitude*, a game which used *Benami*-style gameplay to build up layers of a song via a of sort of rolling space-motorway.

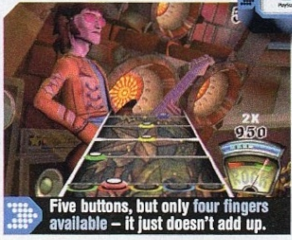
SHRED HEAVEN

Guitar Hero has a similar presentation but only concentrates on the guitar part of the track, challenging you to strike power chords and pick out solos in time with the music. This is performed on a beautifully designed guitar controller. It has five buttons on the fret board which must be pressed while hitting the strumming switch. Then by tilting the guitar upright like *Brian May*, a bonus mode called Star Power is activated, sending your onscreen rocker into a guitar-twirling frenzy.

There's a total of 30 tracks to perform, including as Sum 41's *Fat Lip*, Franz Ferdinand's *Take Me Out* and Boston's *More Than A Feeling*, and each one makes you feel like a superstar.

There's an amazing game here just waiting to be released, all we need now is someone in the industry to pull their finger out and bring it to the UK.

David Harrison



Five buttons, but only four fingers available – it just doesn't add up.

Need to know

What is it?

It's *Amplitude*, the superb Bemani music game, but with a little guitar-shaped controller.

Facts

- Thirty songs to strum through
- Four difficulty settings and a whole world of fun

From the people who made...

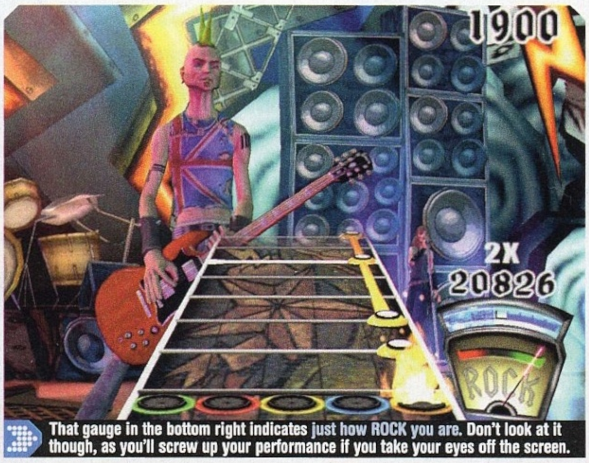
Amplitude	85%

LITTLE STRUMMER BOY

Guitar Hero's incredible controller makes you feel and, if you squint, *look* like a rock god. You can't help strutting around the living room like AC/DC's Angus Young, especially if you're still in your school uniform.

It is playable for left handers, you just have to change a few options.

Just pray that your chosen track doesn't require the orange fret.



That gauge in the bottom right indicates just how ROCK you are. Don't look at it though, as you'll screw up your performance if you take your eyes off the screen.

VERDICT

GM LOVES

- + The wonderful guitar controllers
- + The presence of the whammy bar, totally

GM HATES

- – Not being able to freestyle
- – Getting cramp in the left hand

MOST WANTED METER

This isn't just *Amplitude* with a guitar controller, it is *Amplitude*… with a really cool guitar controller! This well and truly rocks.

5 4 3 2 1

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER MANAGEMENT

Dave Harrison

PS2
- **OUT:** TBC
- **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** KCET
- **PUBLISHER:** KONAMI

WHAT IS IT?

A management game from the people who bring us *PES* each year. The idea is to attract the *PES* hardcore with a management sim that might lack the exhaustive detail of *Football Manager*, but has the familiar presentation of the world's favourite football game.

THE FACTS

- You'll be able to take on the managerial reins of team in one of six European leagues
- The game will use *Pro Evolution Soccer 5's* player database
- You must oversee recruitment of coaches and players, training, and of course, match day team selection

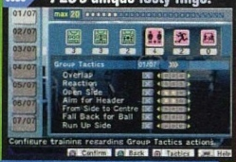
WHAT'S IT LIKE?

All a little strange, mainly as it uses the *Pro Evo Soccer 5* game engine so there's always the urge to pick up the joypad and start making the passes yourself. But you can't – which makes it all a bit frustrating. Then there's the masses of data and menus to trawl through, making it all a bit daunting. Needs patience and a keen *PES* mind.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Pulling one of your players into the office and then have their long, realistic but blank face, just staring at you.

You have to decipher *PES's* unique footy lingo.


Group Tactics 01/07
Overlap
Reaction
Open Side
Aim for Header
From Side to Centre
Fall Back for Ball
Run Up Side
Configure training regarding Group Tactics actions.

CBT
Mr. KONAMI, what did you want to meet with me about?

MOST WANTED METER

Any football game from the *PES* developers has to be respected, but as *PES* is such a superb hands-on game it seems odd to have to surrender control.

ZATHURA

Dave Harrison

PS2 XBOX
- **OUT:** JAN
- **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** HIGH VOLTAGE
- **PUBLISHER:** 2K GAMES

WHAT IS IT?

It's the spin-off game of the *Zathura* movie which is particularly exciting as it is directed by *Swingers* writer and star John Favreau. The actual game is a puzzle solving, robot battling adventure game.

THE FACTS

- Fifteen levels from the *Zathura* universe, including some that don't actually feature in the film
- Three playable characters – control either of the brothers Walter or Danny, or a rampaging robot
- Thirty-six different types of alien to battle against

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

Not very good. It's one of those games that's designed for 'younger' gamers but instead of making it easier to play, they just made it badly. The puzzles are predictable, the melee attack tedious and the level design lacking in any spark whatsoever. While this is preview code, it has already been released in the US so we can't expect many, if any, improvements.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Controlling a huge robot makes a refreshing change from guiding two brothers around a big empty space ship.

Look at the level design. Not particularly exciting.

MOST WANTED METER

We're curious about the film as it was made by the same guys that gave us the marvellous *Elf*, but as for the game, it's seems to be a disappointing cash-in.

GAUNTLET: SEVEN SORROWS

Dave Harrison

PS2 XBOX PC
- **OUT:** FEBRUARY
- **PRICE:** £29.99
- **DEVELOPER:** MIDWAY SAN DIEGO
- **PUBLISHER:** MIDWAY

WHAT IS IT?

Yet another attempt to reinvent the arcade multi-player classic and make it relevant to today's gamers. This time Midway have enrolled the help of *Doom* creator John Romero, but this is more RPG than FPS.

THE FACTS

- The Elf, Wizard, Valkyrie and Warrior all return allowing for 4 player co-op play
- The co-op play will be available online
- Just like an RPG, character strength and stats can be levelled up
- New Junction skills allow the characters to combine and pull of flashy joint moves

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

Well, *Gauntlet*. But if you're too fresh faced to remember that, try picturing one of EA's *Lord of the Rings* but with a token girl. This is pure hack n' slashing, with the four heroes attacking hordes of *D'n'D* beasts, then destroying the generator that's been spewing them out, then fighting a big end of level boss. It's pure arcade predictability but arcadey mindless fun as well.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Drawing in a massive crowd of eager orcs then sending the Valkyrie spinning into them for a 100 hit combo.

This is classic sword and sorcery action.

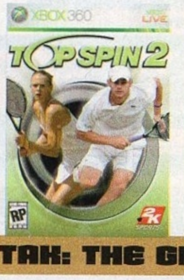
MOST WANTED METER

The *Gauntlet* brand doesn't have much of a draw these days so this will have to be a decent action game to attract attention. But they do brutality very well.

TOP SPIN 2

Dave Harrison

360
- **OUT:** JANUARY
- **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** INDIE BUILT
- **PUBLISHER:** 2K SPORTS



WHAT IS IT?

The return of the ultra-realistc tennis game, now with the Hi-Def compatible power of the 360 behind it – released just in time for the Australian open!

THE FACTS

- Play as or against one of 24 tennis stars Andy Roddick Roger Federer, Tim Henman, Venus Williams and Maria Sharapova
- Detailed Create-a-Player option
- Grand Slam mode let you take a tennis player from Junior Championships all the way to the top

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

This might not come as much surprise, but it's a lot like *Top Spin 2* but with better graphics. All the same shots remain – drop shot, lob, slice, top spin as does the 'risk shot' which is activated with the right trigger, which attempts a potentially point winning shot – but at a 'risk'. So overall, the same decent tennis game.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Being able to make Federer look stupid. Only on easy difficulty setting though as that man is a tennis god.

Just look at that crowd! Both of them!

MOST WANTED METER

Top Spin is a nice tennis game so it's good to see it getting a Xbox 360 release – it's only problem from a multi-format point of view is that it isn't as good as *Virtua Tennis*.

TAK: THE GREAT JUJU CHALLENGE

Rob Taylor

CUBE GBA DS
- **OUT:** 17TH JANUARY
- **PRICE:** £39.99/£29.99
- **DEVELOPER:** AVALANCHE
- **PUBLISHER:** THQ

WHAT IS IT?

Tak changes tack – instead of pure platforming our cute little scamp now teams up with his meatheaded pal Lok to compete in *The Great Juju Challenge*. Each character has his own specific attributes, so – you've guessed it – teamwork is the order of the day.

THE FACTS

- Up to two-player co-op gameplay
- Shaman upgrades and bonus blessings let you customise your heroes with new spells and abilities
- DS version utilises both the touch screen and the mic

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

Great fun. We've always had a soft spot for *Tak* here at *GM* and found the co-op gameplay a real laugh. All of your opponents – from the curvy Team Grammazon to the evil Team Black Mist – provide a real challenge, and whether it's battling the fierce Rokkers or solving the tricky time-based puzzles, we were hooked.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Playing as Tak, we found it demeaning that we can no longer scale ledges. Instead, Lok hurls us up into hard to reach areas.

Great. We carry barrels while Lok does the fun bits.

MOST WANTED METER

Though the combat is painfully basic and some of the platforming sections fiddly (we plunged to our doom more than once) Tak's got the heart of a hero.

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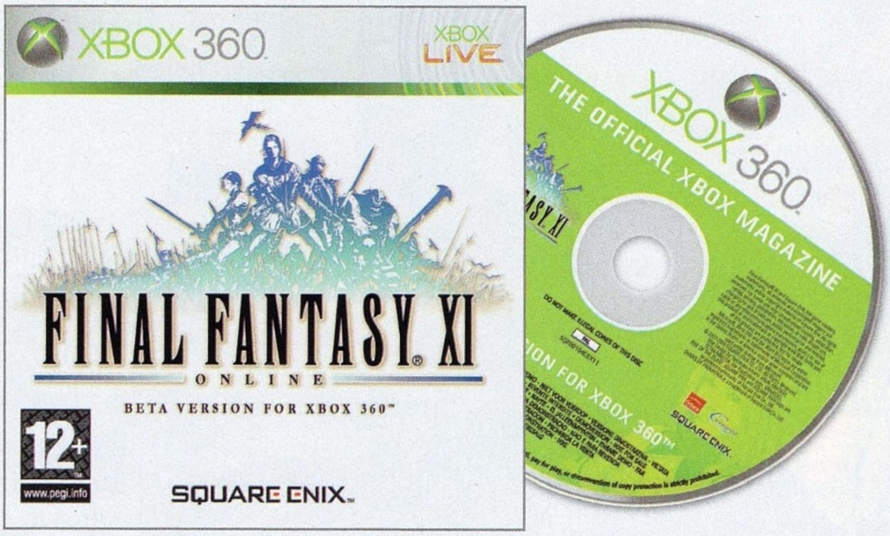
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**Final Fantasy XI Online* Beta Version for Xbox 360 is playable until closed by Square-Enix, and requires an Xbox Live Gold account, Xbox 360 Hard Drive and a broadband connection.

EMAIL US: gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk, subject heading GMail.

WRITE TO US: GMail, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

TEXT US: Send GMAIL then your message to 84070. But keep it short!

Mad? Bad? Sad? See how each letter writer's feeling at a glance!

😃 Happy | 😜 Mad | ☹ Unhappy | 😠 Angry | 😮 Surprised | 🙂 Normal

WE L♥VE GAMES

Welcome to the bit of *GM* that's stuffed with your mail, game ideas, unreasonable demands – anything that shows how much we♥games. With a capital ♥!

Sad Stu

I need over a million cheats for every console.

😜 **Stuart Elias, email**

Why haven't you answered me yet, you b******s!

😜 **Stuart Elias, email**

YOU B*$*@!*S!

I would like to apologise for the undernoted emails you received and any other emails that have been sent to you. My eight-year-old son has been sending out emails under my husband's email address without our knowledge or consent.

I cannot apologise enough for this and can assure you this will not happen again. He has been banned from the PC altogether, we have now password protected the Internet, so he cannot get access to this at all, and he has lost all pocket money and privileges for the next month as his punishment. Please accept my sincerest apologies for any offence this may have caused you.

☹ **Mrs. Elias**

No problem Mrs. Elias, it gave all of Team *GM* a good laugh.

Liberty XXX

GM,

I can't believe you could say that *GTA* on the PSP is "just a step sideways." Do you remember when we all loved *GTA 1 & 2?* Then we heard *GTA 3* would be in full 3D and we all thought "no way!"

This is just the same thing! We all played *GTA* on the GBA and when we heard the next handheld *GTA* would be full 3D I couldn't believe it! To get a whole game like *GTA* on to the PSP, and do it so well is so much more than "just a step sideways"

😮 **Sam Austin Malvern**

We asked Dave about this for you Sam, and this is what he had to say: "Well, in terms of handheld entertainment it's unquestionably a step forward, but in terms of actual *GTA* games it's a only step sideways as, apart from the multi-player, there's no new features, tricks or interesting gameplay. It's essentially a *GTA3* mission pack. That is what we call a sideways step. Now be gone with you and stop questioning my omnipotence."

FANSITE OF THE MONTH

http://forum.gamesradar.com/viewtopic.php?t=793568start=0

Dreamed up by some clever *GamesRadar* forumites, gBay is the place to get rid of all your unwanted games and trade them for new titles, or just swap games for limited periods of time. You simply list your wares and wait for people to get in contact. The generally success rate appears to be extremely high, but exercise caution when you send stuff to people you don't know.

gBay is in NO WAY endorsed by either *GamesRadar* or *GamesMaster!*

Nominated by Dennis Jameson, via email

Fat Controller

Dear GM,

After looking at all three next-gen consoles I have noticed one fault with all of them: the controllers. All three of seem to be less ergonomic than those of the current gen consoles.

Look at the PS2 controller: it's been around since the PSone days, but it's comfortable to hold and all the buttons can be reached and pressed easily. Does it matter that it's 10 years old? Just because Microsoft and Nintendo have designed new controllers doesn't mean that Sony has to do the same with its controversial new 'boomerang' design.

The Xbox controller is not as easy to use as the PS2's but it was designed for American hands, which are bigger than

WIN!

If you're the Star Letter writer, you'll win the game of your choice on any format, courtesy of our mates at Britain's top games store – GAME. Get scribbling and you could be a winner!

gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk

GAME
www.game.uk.com

STAR LETTER!

Piracy Doesn't Pay

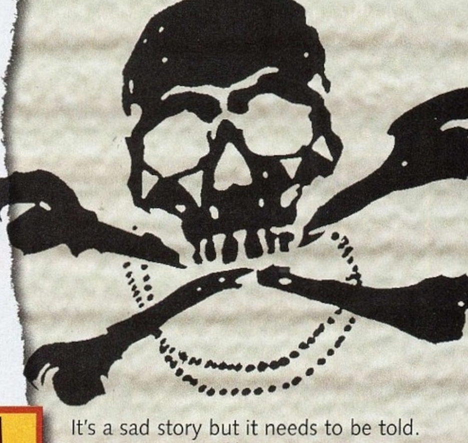
Dear Gamesmaster,

For many years now I have been using the Internet as a source of games (and I *don't* mean buying them from Amazon). I'm ashamed to admit it, since I've always understood the effects of piracy on developers and the threat it poses to the games industry. I just didn't care.

I've since found that I've lost all interest in the actual games themselves. Since I have a near inexhaustible source of software, I'll maybe give a new game I've pirated a few fleeting hours of attention before deleting it for the 'next big thing'. Now I'll watch my mates unwrap their freshly bought retail copies before playing them to death, and realise I'll never share their feeling of exhilaration again.

Basically kids… as tempting as it is, do not go anywhere near games piracy. It harms developers, gamers and – in my own personal case – it has totally ruined everything I've ever loved about games. If only I could turn back the clock…

Anonymous ☹



It's a sad story but it needs to be told. Piracy may seem like a great way to play games gratis before they hit shops, but it's like a drug. Before you know it, you've OD'd on games like the sad case of Anonymous here.

We weren't sure whether giving a free game to a self-confessed pirate was a good idea at first. Mate, if you promise to ditch the habit it's yours – maybe it'll encourage you to take gaming into your heart again. Good luck.

Gmail Filter

Picking out the special kids from the *GM* mail bag and putting them on their own bus

MOST DISTANT EMAILER:..........Algeria – 1,035 miles (1,666 km)
BEST NAME:..........Harry Hatt. Better than Harry Potter or even Barry Hatter, we reckon.
MOST POINTLESS EMAIL CONVERSATION:..........'CONFERMATION' [sic] with Darrell Allen. (Hi Darrell).
BEST (AND ONLY) SPAM FILTER ENTRY *EVER*:..........Jonnytheeejit from Termonfeckin, Ireland. (Titter).
MOST WELCOME SPAM EMAIL:..........SI Swimsuit videos: Up Close & Personal. Oh yes.

SCARIEST GREEN BAG

360 instructs you how to kill toddlers.

EARLIEST CHRISTMAS CARD

November 25th. Happy Crimbo Liam Cunningham.

STINGIEST 'POSTCARD'

WHEAT BISCUITS

Weetabix! *And* a second-class stamp.

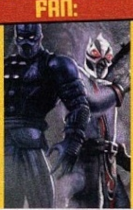
MOST UNLIKELY CONSOLE

reminder

Remember to keep away from small children
And just enjoy playing Mini Xbox.

A 'mini' Xbox. Even 360 is pretty huge, Harry Hatt.

BIGGEST S&M FAN:



Go easy on the rubber Tom Dingley.

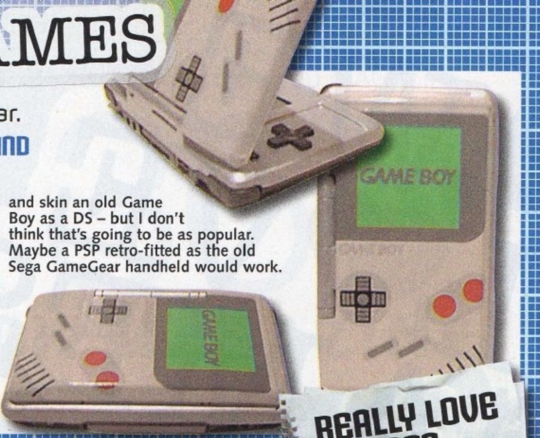
WE LOVE GAMES

The bit of GM that's stuffed to bursting point with your mail

WE REALLY LOVE GAMES

Chatting with the people who've taken it all too far.

THIS MONTH: CHRIS THOMPSON, 21, OF MARYLAND USA - AND A DS GONE OLD



GM: Yo! It's the DS, on a 1990's 'tip'.
Chris: Everyone loves retro gadgets, and the NES has been played out – so I thought it was time for some retro Game Boy goodness.
GM: Let us in on the secret.
Chris: The Game Boy graphic was designed on a PC, then sent to a machine called a Plotter, which cuts the shapes out of vinyl. All the vinyl pieces were put together and then applied to the DS. It took about two hours.
GM: We'll get started right away!
Chris: For someone to make one exactly like I did would probably be unrealistic. Your best bet would be to find a place that does vinyl graphics – like a sign shop, or a decal website.
GM: Best left for skilled hands like yours, then.
Chris: Actually, about five minutes after I finished it off, I took it outside and dropped it on the asphalt. Nice.
GM: Has it won you new friends?
Chris: Kids online think I'm awesome. Friends think I'm a huge dork.
GM: Up next?
Chris: I was going to do the opposite and skin an old Game Boy as a DS – but I don't think that's going to be as popular. Maybe a PSP retro-fitted as the old Sega GameGear handheld would work.

REALLY LOVE GAMES?

Then this could be you! Spent long evenings turning your love of games into something 3D? Send us the pics and stuff to We♥Games, Gamesmaster, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. Everyone featured gets a free game!

LIST OF DEMANDS

What does the next *Grand Theft Auto* really need? You tell us...

GRAND THEFT AUTO 4

- Destructible buildings
- Designer clothes
- Wear superhero costumes that also give you superpowers
- Own pets like cats and dogs
- Visit the zoo and train gorillas and tigers to attack people
- Include UFOs
- Schools where you have to teach lessons to pupils
- Tornados and other natural disasters
- Helicopters that you can fit a gang of 10 inside
- More vehicles, like submarines, cargo ships, cruise liners and aircraft carriers
- More weaponry, like bow and arrows, a battle sword, a wizard's staff (that has five spells in it), nuclear weapons, photon rays and torpedo rocket launchers
- Base it in Birmingham

Ian Salt, Birmingham (we imagine) ☺

JAK & DAXTER 4

- Dune buggies should have improved handling and be able to power slide instead of having an emergency brake
- Multi-player and online modes like arena battles, haven city races, hoverboard contests and rat hunting on leapers or in buggies
- Hand-to-hand weapons like swords, with Daxter having his own personal set of weapons
- More cities to visit, the ability to travel over the country in different ships, scrapping with enemies along the way
- More jet board moves, and the ability to using weapons on them
- Different playable characters, with changeable costumes and signature vehicles

Simon Ward, email ☺

FIFA 07

- Ability to tackle the referee
- Start riots with the opposing teams' fans
- *Matrix*-style slow motion shots when you're about to score a goal
- Run off the pitch and into the crowd for no particular reason
- Sabotage the opposing team by putting super glue on their boots
- During loading time have a mini-game where you play as a fan and hurl eggs at players while they warm up
- Kick the ball so hard that the shot sends the goalkeeper through the net as well.

Peter Stewart (a non footy fan), Ballyclare ☺

MAKE YOUR LIST OF DEMANDS!

How would you make the next game in your favourite series better? Simply study computer science at university for three years, learn the C++ programming language and get a job at a top games developer. OR make your List of Demands so game creators have no more excuses for not fitting Lara with a proper support bra or putting monkeys in *GTA 4* right NOW! Send your demands to us at gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk, subject List of Demands or to List of Demands, We♥Games, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. They WILL be made to learn.

British ones [Are they?, Ed]. Having played a demo of the 360 in Game, the new controller isn't that bad but it's nowhere near as suitable as the PS2's. And then there's the Revolution controller – just imagine the wrist cramps after playing *Metroid Prime 3* for a few hours!

Simon Bowden, ☺ email

Interesting points Simon, but we're inclined to disagree. The 360 pad is a thing of beauty, the PS3 pad is still very much in development but surely Sony won't let us down. And the Revolution? It's a daring move on Ninty's part…

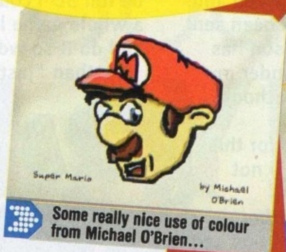
SEND IT IN!

Love games? Then write us a letter, draw little hearts on it or something, and address it to We Love Games, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.
Or send picture of your hi-scores and bizarre gaming moments by taking digital camera shots and attaching them to emails sent to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk What we want this month... • More pictures/paintings/models/movies • More hi-scores • MORE GAME IDEAS – SEND 'SCREENSHOTS' AND BOXART!

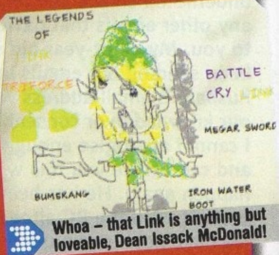
THINGS TO MAKE AND DO!

THIS MONTH'S TASK...

Following our call to arms in Issue 167, your first batch of Artpad efforts have been rolling in. There have been some lovely examples of shading and whatnot. Head over to http://artpad.art.com/artpad/painter and get doodling.



Some really nice use of colour from Michael O'Brien...

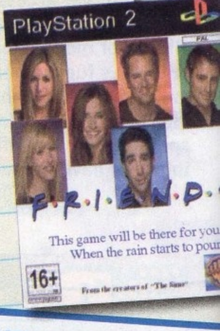


Whoa – that Link is anything but loveable, Dean Issack McDonald!

MY GAME IDEA

FRIENDS - THE GAME

COPYRIGHT: GIDEON WAY, ADDRESS UNKNOWN

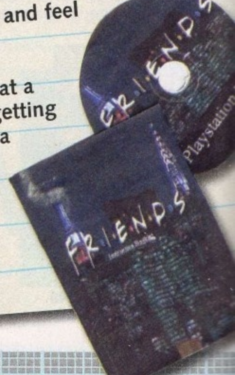

PlayStation 2
F.R.I.E.N.D.S
This game will be there for you
When the rain starts to pour
16+
From the creators of "The Sims"

WHAT IS IT: Duh. *Friends – The Game* would capture all the laughs, tears and tension of the coffee-slurping gang and include cameos from series 'legends' like Gunther, Janice and Cathy. They'll also be different endings, so you can find out what would have happened if Phoebe got together with Joey, if Monica stayed with Richard and more.

QUOTE FOR THE BOX:
THIS GAME WILL BE THERE FOR YOU, WH
THE RAIN STARTS TO POUR

HOW IT PLAYS: Think *The Sims*, but set in a *Friends* universe. Play as Ross and it's not just Rachel on the menu – a world of romantic opportunity awaits. Play matchmaker and help Joey fall in love, slap Chandler after he cracks one too many annoying jokes and feel the wrath of Monica's famous rages.

POTENTIAL BEST BIT: Telling Rachel that a certain shampoo made our hair all greasy. Or finally getting folically-challenged weirdo Gunther a girlfriend. Slapping Janice the banshee... the list is endless.



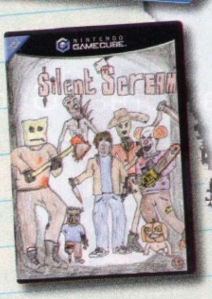
JUDGEMENT

If the inevitable major lawsuit by Warner wasn't an issue, this could be gaming dynamite.

QUOTE FOR THE BOX:
SOMEONE'S PULLING YOUR STRINGS – AND THEY'RE A MIDGET PIRATE

MY GAME IDEA

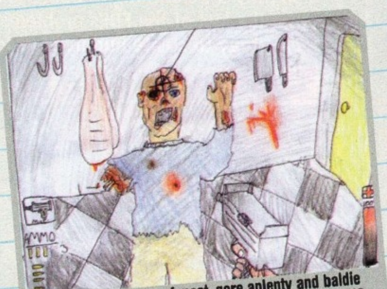
SILENT SCREAM
COPYRIGHT: SAUL BIDDULPH, CHESHIRE



WHAT IS IT: When Steve wakes from his coma something seemed different. There was no one around, the streets were empty. He was alone. But then the creature started coming… Steve has to fight to save his very soul while unravelling the secret of the evil puppet master.

HOW IT PLAYS: An FPS that draws influences from horror fare like Stephen King's *IT*, *Resident Evil*, *Silent Hill* and *28 Days Later*. It's as much of a mystery as a shooter, although there's a great deal of emphasis upon decapitations and disembowellings. Wield weapons like a butcher's knife, Uzi, shotgun and – the gore fan's favourite – a chainsaw!

POTENTIAL BEST BIT: The excellent box art hints at some really original enemies, so boss fights against the likes of pumpkin-headed babies, killer clowns and midget pirates should ensures the scares come thick and fast…



Cleavers, slabs of meat, gore aplenty and baldie psychos. Had *Corrie's* Fred Elliot finally flipped?

JUDGEMENT

Some top character design and original boss fights means we'd shout about *Silent Scream* from the rooftops.

Europe and the US can barely rustle up a 360 between them, even failing to fulfil preorders…

NEXT GEN NUGGETS

PS3 Panic
Hi GM,
I'm a massive PlayStation fan but I have been really disappointed with Sony's organisation regarding PS3. I mean, the release date is always being pushed back, the kind of pricing being talked about is crazy and I've heard that there is the possibility that you'll only be able to use it on a certain type of telly! Is this true???
Jay, Winchester

Calm down, Jay. Latest rumours suggest a Spring release date for PS3 in Japan, with the US launch following in the autumn. So it could be Christmas 2006 over here. As for price not even Mr Sony's wife knows at the moment. Also, although PS3 will – like 360 – look best on a HDTV, it'll still run perfectly well on a regular one as well.

The Joy of X
Lewis Waldron, the Xbox handheld should be called the X-Held.
Bob. D, Swindon

X-Held/Excelled. Snappy, we like it. Nice work Bob.

Revolutionary?
Hi GM,
People were surprised when Nintendo showed off its new Revolution controller, with many writing it off as utter rubbish, or saying that it wasn't going to work.
Aren't we forgetting that this is the very same Nintendo who gave the world the D-pad and the analogue stick? Where would gaming be without these things?
Sam Austin

They also brought us *Virtual Boy* and *R.O.B.* though, Sam. Our point? Er… we're not sure, really.

Dear GamesMaster,
After reading last month's *GM* I was shocked to find that so many people criticising the Revolution's controller. How could they? You can use it as a chainsaw in *Resi 4* for pete's sake. Or even smack virtual golf balls, tennis balls and baseballs with it. It can be a sword, a gun, a fist… You can lob it as a grenade or brick, or even an American football. The list is endless. Open your eyes people – this is a revolution!
Owen Simpson, Northampton

No, it's *the* Revolution. We agree with you though, the potential for Nintendo's new console is mind blowing and we're surprised that so many gamers have failed to recognise its many possibilities.

X-Rated
Being a hard-core gamer, I couldn't wait to get my hands on the Xbox 360, so much so that I pre-ordered one almost three months early! I then got a call, only a couple of days before the release date, informing me there had been certain 'complications'. They explained that, as my order was so early, they hadn't noted that I wanted the premium pack. Owing to this oversight I was either getting the core pack or nothing! Now, frankly, I think the core pack is a rip off for desperate parents trying to grab a console for their child! I was annoyed by this and uttered some choice words to them before putting the phone down! It's a premium mess up, to the very core…
Saleem Sharif, email

Our advice, Saleem – grit your teeth, opt for the core pack and revel in the fact that you're one of very few gamers who'll actually get to play 360 before Christmas. Feel free to give the staff in your local game shop a well-deserved slap from us though! They deserve it.

Bad Press
Dear GM
It's becoming a fact of life that a new console equals shortages on release, and by the looks of it the X360 is going to be the worst of the lot, possibly putting even the PSP's shortage to shame. But I have to admit that I was pretty riled when I saw 10 360's being given away as a prize in a tabloid. Okay, so it's *only* 10, and okay it's only the 'pointless' core pack, but surely this is an insult to gamers who have put their names down (and in some cases, their cash) in a hope to get an X360 first and supporting Microsoft in their latest venture? I know I've pre-ordered far too late to be affected by something like this but even so, damn marketing… grumble, grumble…
Richard Cadman, Staffordshire

Too true Rich, especially when you know they'll probably end up on Ebay selling for £500 within a few days. Gaming can be a cruel mistress, but that's what happens when a console launches.

WE WANT YOUR JOB!

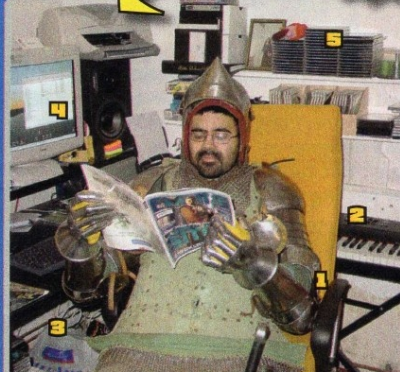
Pestering the jammiest jobsmiths in the games biz.
Andrew Barnabas, one half of Bob & Barn musicians

Hey – you're one half of Bob & Barn, videogame musicians of 'note', ahaha. "Around 100 games over 15 years – *Juiced, Kung Fu Chaos*, and we got a BAFTA for the *Primal* score." Did you study? "I've got a degree in music and an A-level in computer science – this is probably not the most surprising career path." How did you drum up interest? "At 17, I spent my summer holiday off school ringing around game companies and posting disks with my songs on." Fame and for-tune? "I produced 16 of the 64 different *'I'm Lovin' It'* jingles that McDonald's are using in their ads." We're lovin' that. "The worldwide creative director of McDonald's has a really rubbish business card." Keep it down mate – you want to keep working with them, right?

HOW JAMMY IS THAT?
He's got two printers!

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

01 Suit of armour – "We did all the sound effects for *MediEvil The Resurrection* on PSP, available at www.bobandbarn.com. The easiest way to get the sound of someone jumping around in a suit of armour, is to put on a suit of armour and jump around in it. There's metal rivets in there: they drew blood."
02 Array of musical kit – "I started out as the only sound person at Millennium Games in Cambridge, a 22-year-old in a £220 million studio. Now we only need £40,000 worth of computer and soundcards to get the same results."
03 Eggs – "I like eggs. I don't have them every day, maybe 20 times a week. It's part of the reason we have an egg as our logo.
04 Hotline to conductors – "What we do here is a mockup. We use real orchestras for the final versions."
05 Sample CDs – "Advice for wannabe game musicians: get the presentation right, and don't just try and put the music *you* like making into a game."
05 Bobblehead Mario – "I can't remember where he came from. I do have my Italian heritage, so I guess there's some kind of connection there."



We ♥ Old Games

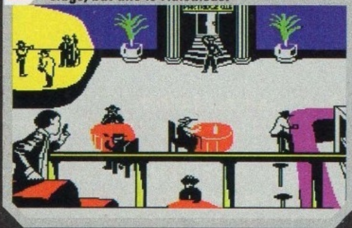
These gangster-based crusties are the Great-Great-Godfathers...

With Mark Green from his caravan of retro game love.

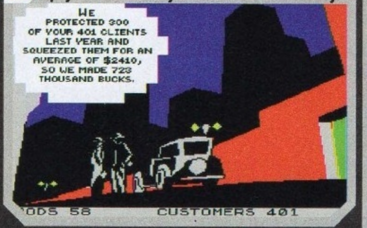
MUGSY (ZX SPECTRUM, 1984)

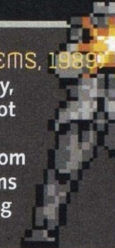
They called it "the first interactive comic strip". 'Interactive' meaning you got to choose how many mobsters you'd be buying to terrorise the city each year, then wait for the results – mobster life turned into a three-row Excel sheet. At the time, the pictures were like a baseball bat slammed in your eyes. No real blood or violence here, though – unless you count the damage inflicted on your ears by the beepy version of the Charleston played on the title screen.

Is that really a gun? We've heard of firing slugs, but this is ridiculous.



723,000 quids – who said crime doesn't pay? You could buy a house with that money.

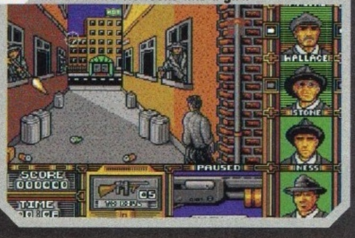

WE PROTECTED 300 OF YOUR 401 CLIENTS LAST YEAR AND SQUEEZED THEM FOR AN AVERAGE OF $2410, SO WE MADE 723 THOUSAND BUCKS.
ODS 58
CUSTOMERS 401



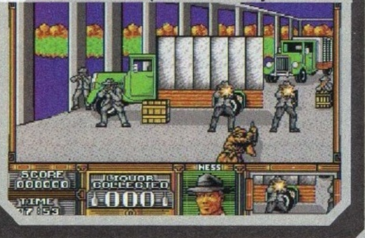
THE UNTOUCHABLES (ALL SYSTEMS, 1989)

Irresponsibly rubbish game of the 1987 movie. Sean Connery, the best bit of the film, is hardly anywhere to be seen as Eliot Ness and crew a) climb over boxes to shoot a gangster also climbing over boxes, b) shoot people and c) shoot people from a slightly different angle. Booze smuggling by the mob seems to be the last of the FBI's problems: the mafia's using cloning technology to create hundreds of identical grey suits.

Wait – there's Sean Connery! But why so much hair? He looks like a girl.



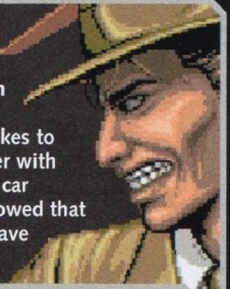
We love the guy squeezed behind the tiny box. You won't spot him in a hurry.

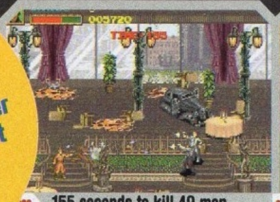


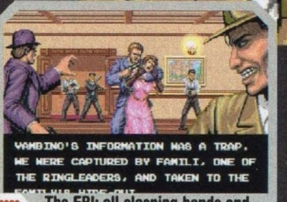
DEAD CONNECTION

(ARCADES, 1992)

Four FBI agents decide to take the law into their own hands – if only the feds had given *all* their agents auto-targeting guns and enough paracetamol as it takes to take 30 shots to the chest and live. A straight shooter with explode-u-like scenery and special translation ("The car suddenly screeched to a half"), *Dead Connection* showed that the mob can throw 500 men at a problem and still have some over left for the final cutscene.

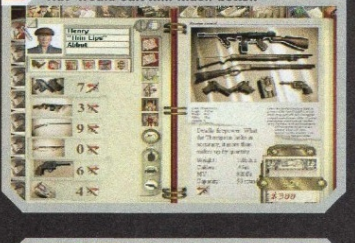


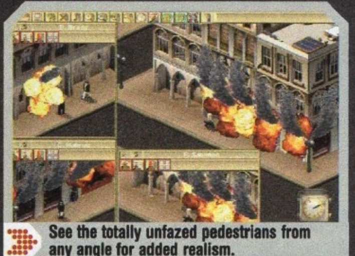

155 seconds to kill 49 men. Call that a challenge?


YAMBINO'S INFORMATION WAS A TRAP. WE WERE CAPTURED BY FAMILI, ONE OF THE RINGLEADERS, AND TAKEN TO THE
The FBI: all clasping hands and clearly false teeth.

RETRO KNOWLEDGE: In 1990, Nintendo shipped the first Super Nintendo systems at night to avoid a Chinese mafia heist

They call this mobster 'Thin Lips'. 'Cake Hat' would suit him much better.




See the totally unfazed pedestrians from any angle for added realism.

GANGSTERS: ORGANIZED CRIME (PC, 1998)

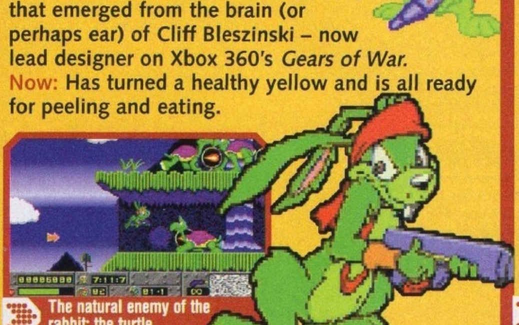
Mafia management so complicated that it'd be easier to pilot a space shuttle blindfold while figuring out what's going on in *Lost.* The soothing lullaby of a city getting bribed, run over and shot was your reward for getting on top of things – or, in a first for a mafia game, you could choose to go straight. If you ever got past page 784 of the manual, that is. Who knew organised crime meant being quite so organised?

RETRO KNOWLEDGE: Henry Hill – the real-life Goodfellas gangster – says that The Getaway "sucks"

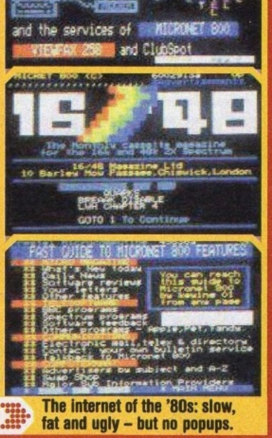
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Worryingly coloured gun-toting bunny that emerged from the brain (or perhaps ear) of Cliff Bleszinski – now lead designer on Xbox 360's *Gears of War.*

Now: Has turned a healthy yellow and is all ready for peeling and eating.


The natural enemy of the rabbit: the turtle.

YOU DON'T KNOW YOU'RE BORN!


By simply connecting your micro to the telephone line via a low-cost modem, you can access Prestel Microcomputing,

and the services of MICRONET 800

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10 Barley Mow Passage, Chiswick, London

GOTO 1 To Continue

FAST GUIDE TO MICRONET 800 FEATURES

The internet of the '80s: slow, fat and ugly – but no popups.

INTERNET

Xbox Live? Online games? *Internet?* All you got for having a modem in the ZX Spectrum days was access to Micronet800: basically an online version of teletext, with news and reviews, email, and pictures blockier than Legoland. All delivered to your 1980s wood-panelled telly at the blistering pace of 300 baud – or, almost 50 times slower than a 56k modem. We're still waiting for a page we started loading in 1983.

FREE PLAY

PLAY THE GAMES OF YESTERDAY

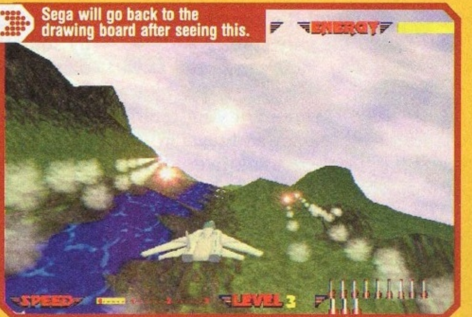
AFTER BURNER

Originally released: 1987

Why you must play it: It's the reason why 360's *After Burner Climax* is so hotly anticipated – mid-sky dogfighting, originally with spinny sit-down cabinet.

How to get it: http://digilander.libero.it/brodarodasoft/after.htm. Or a witchier version at http://www.moedan.com/mb/

Sega will go back to the drawing board after seeing this.



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- **OUT:** 24 FEBRUARY (HOPEFULLY) • **FORMATS:** PS2, XB, PSP, PC, XB 360
- **PRICE:** TBC • **DEVELOPER:** CRYSTAL DYNAMICS • **PUBLISHER:** EIDOS
- **ONLINE:** POSSIBLE 360 MARKETPLACE CONTENT • **WEB:** WWW.EIDOS.CO.UK • **PLAYERS:** 1

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER® LEGEND

Back to settle scores and make amends...

Specialist: Dave Harrison

Visiting the Eidos HQ, it soon becomes apparent how much Lara Croft means to the British games publisher. Her presence is everywhere – on posters, cutouts, costumes worn by the various Lara models. Hell, the office is even based in Wimbledon – Lara's birthplace.

So it's no surprise that it was Eidos who took the disappointment of *Angel of Darkness* the hardest, not just because the success of Lara paid the bills but because she was the soul of the company: as Greg Housnam, the producer of *Tomb Raider: Legend* says, 'Lara is Eidos'.

With this in mind, it becomes very obvious that *Tomb Raider: Legend* is no ordinary game for Eidos – it's rehabilitation, an apology almost, a time to wipe the slate clean.

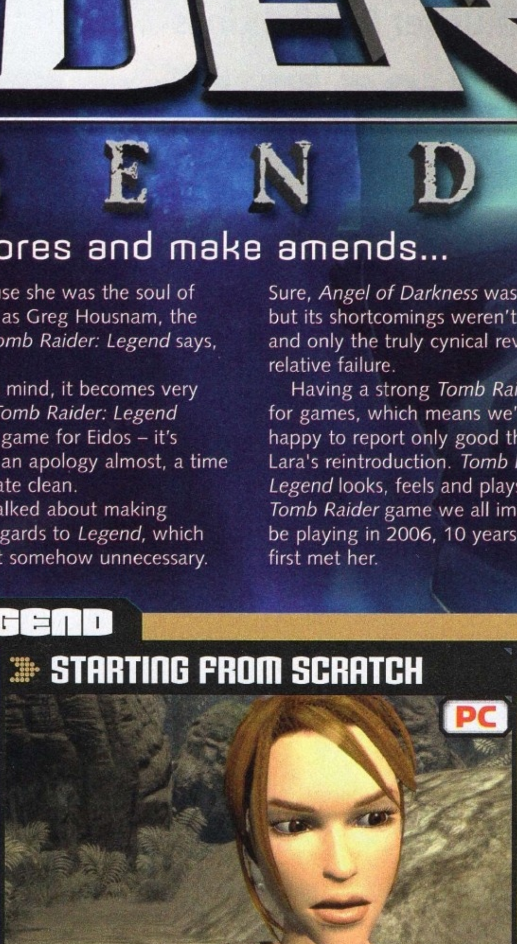
Housnam talked about making 'amends' in regards to *Legend*, which is heartfelt but somehow unnecessary. Sure, *Angel of Darkness* was a let down, but its shortcomings weren't intentional and only the truly cynical revelled at its relative failure.

Having a strong *Tomb Raider* is good for games, which means we're extremely happy to report only good things from Lara's reintroduction. *Tomb Raider: Legend* looks, feels and plays like the *Tomb Raider* game we all imagined we'd be playing in 2006, 10 years after we first met her.

RECREATING THE LEGEND

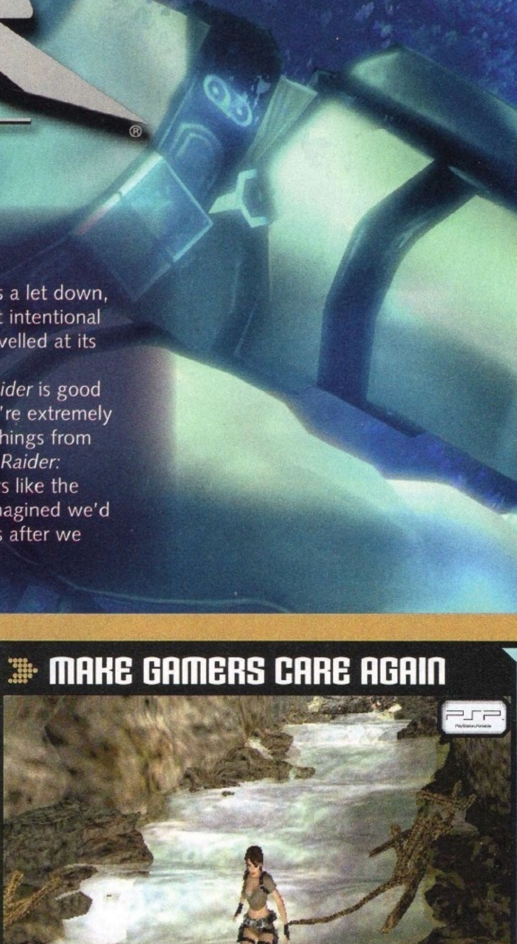
The developers responsible for attempting to reset the standards with Lara are US team Crystal Dynamics. They were also responsible for the excellent *Soul Reaver* games and, most recently, the PS2 shooter *Snowblind*. Talented people but talented American people, now handling a British game, which might have been a problem if Lara starting blurting out 'awesome' every time entered a new tomb. But the presence of Toby Gard, the creator of Lara Croft, on the staff ensured that wasn't going to happen. The team then set themselves certain objectives and parameters when starting the project to ensure that lessons had been learned from the previous *Tomb Raiders*.

STARTING FROM SCRATCH



Rather than using design, animation or technology from the previous games, Crystal Dynamics started as the though they were creating an entirely new game. The most obvious way this can be seen is in the way Lara looks. Instead of the dead eyes and stuck-on lips that she had before, she has a much more natural look, still stylised in her proportions of course, but far more 'believable'.

MAKE GAMERS CARE AGAIN

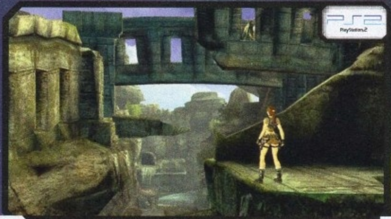


Part of the task that befell to *Legend* was to make gamers care about Lara again. In *Angel of Darkness*, the plot and the character building was left for the cutscenes and the new tough edgy persona made Lara out to be a bit of bully. In *Legend* however, the plot will bleed into the gameplay with characters chatting to Lara in-game, drawing the player into the plot rather than having it shoved right in their face.

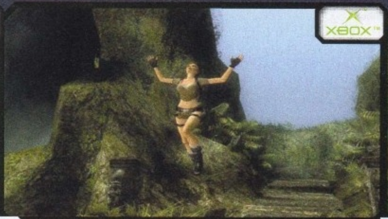
LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

MULTI-TALENTED

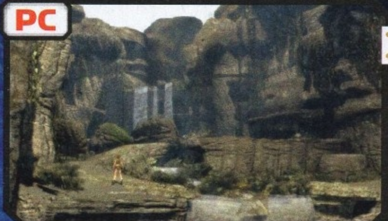
Unlike the last game, which only came out for the PC and PS2, *Tomb Raider: Legend* will be a multi-format release that will include versions for a next-gen console and a handheld. While the actual gameplay and structure of game is the same for each version, there're some subtle differences between them.



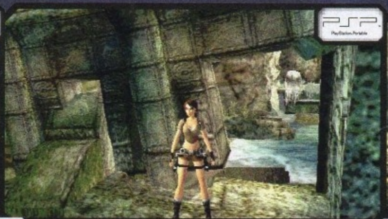
Lara Croft began her life of adventure on a Sony console, but no PS2 *Tomb Raider* has ever looked so stunning. There's a real sense of scale to the game, which manages to replicate picture-book waterfalls and ancient statues with fascinating detail. Then an extra level of magic is sprinkled on with the presentation. Gorgeous shadows and delicate particle effects make the dusty interiors and leafy exteriors feel truly authentic.



It's only when you switch directly between the Xbox version and the PS2 that you can make out any differences. Basically the textures are slightly smoother on Xbox, but the detail, draw distances and feeling of scale all remain the same as the lovingly created PS2 version. It's pure Xbox standard, which says a lot about what Crystal Dynamics have managed to achieve with the PS2 – it's impressive stuff.



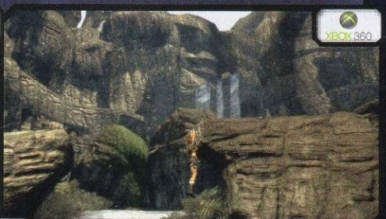
Eidos have been very smart when it comes to the PC game. As they are making versions for both the Xbox and the Xbox 360, they'll able to provide the PC gamers with the appropriate versions for the relative standard of their PC. As well as giving gamers the option to alter the levels of textures, the PC will automatically load up the standard of visuals that it can cope with, resulting in Xbox quality for low end computers and 360 for the top end.



Truly remarkable – it's just like the PS2 version! This is partly due to the fact that the PSP is a very impressive piece of kit, particularly the standard of its screen. But because it's smaller in size than your telly, the texture detail can be lessened slightly without it being noticeable. What also helps is that there isn't any onscreen info used in the game that obscures any of the view.

As for the lack of second analogue stick to control the camera, the view can be controlled by using the left stick while holding L1. Or just one click of L1 will snap the camera directly behind Lara again.

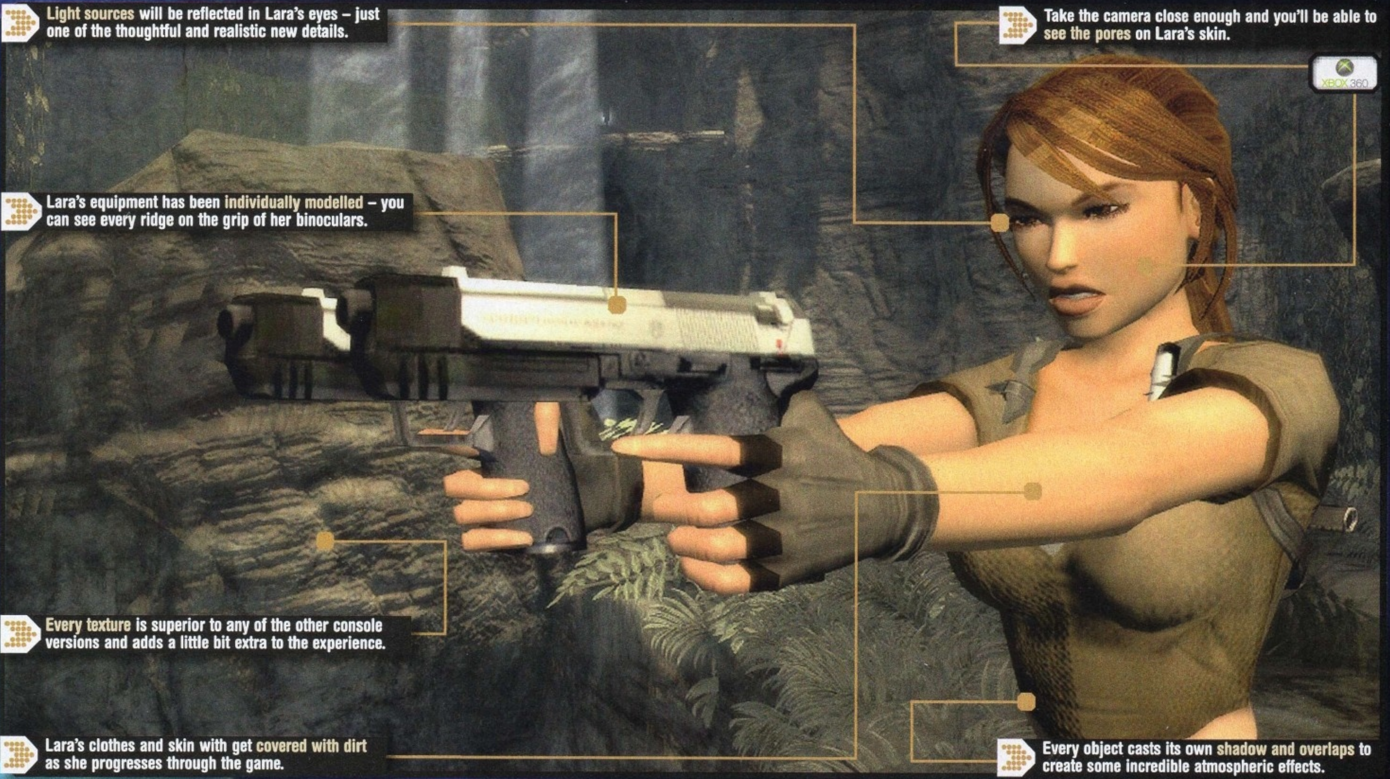
It's not just the visual standard that's so exciting, but the PSP version is the complete console game. And if that wasn't enough, Crystal Dynamics is hoping to implement a system where you can swap saves between the PS2 and the PSP version. So you'll be able to reach a checkpoint at home then complete the following puzzle on the bus. Only problem is, you'd have to have both PSP and PS2 versions of the game. Pricey!



In terms of gameplay, animation and features, the 360 version is identical to the other console versions. Eidos are considering some use of the 360 Marketplace, (costumes maybe?) but there's no Lara online multi-player.

So that means that big difference is, of course, the visuals which have been specifically created for the next-gen console, making it not just a polished up port.

While graphics alone do not make a game, they make a significant impact in *Legend*, as in order to show all the extraordinary lighting effects, the tombs been made much darker, forcing Lara to use her torch far more. Suddenly the tone of the game changes: instead of the khaki, *Boys Own* (or *Girls Own*) feel, it now has a real menace that has a vibe of the potholing horror film *The Descent* about it. Danger seems to lurk in every gloomy corner, and shafts of light create long, distorted shadows. which means just wandering through a tomb has a real suspense and edge to it.



Light sources will be reflected in Lara's eyes – just one of the thoughtful and realistic new details.

Take the camera close enough and you'll be able to see the pores on Lara's skin.

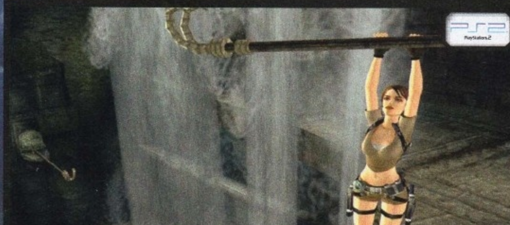
Lara's equipment has been individually modelled – you can see every ridge on the grip of her binoculars.

Every texture is superior to any of the other console versions and adds a little bit extra to the experience.

Lara's clothes and skin with get covered with dirt as she progresses through the game.

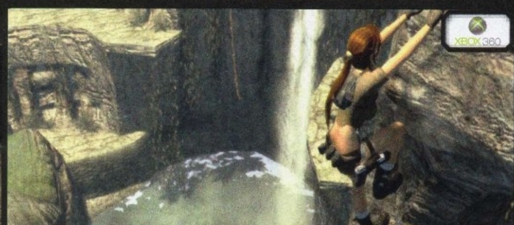
Every object casts its own shadow and overlaps to create some incredible atmospheric effects.

MAKE LARA FLY AGAIN



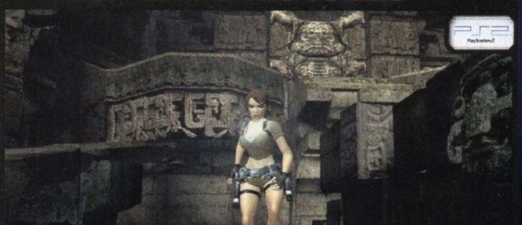
Lara Croft has to be able to climb like a squirrel and swing like an ape – but still look like a lady. To achieve this, a range of new animations have been created to allow Lara to tackle any obstacle. The character animation that came first, and *then* the levels were designed around Lara's capabilities. So the whole game is a giant adventure playground designed specifically so Lara can show off.

MAKE IT ENJOYABLE TO PLAY



As Lara is an incredibly flexible character, it was always going to be difficult to incorporate all her moves in an easy to use control system – difficult but essential. Complex moves have to be able to be chained together to make the game look dynamic, so the game has been rigorously tested by focus groups to make sure it doesn't require the finger dexterity of a concert pianist to make Lara climb a ladder.

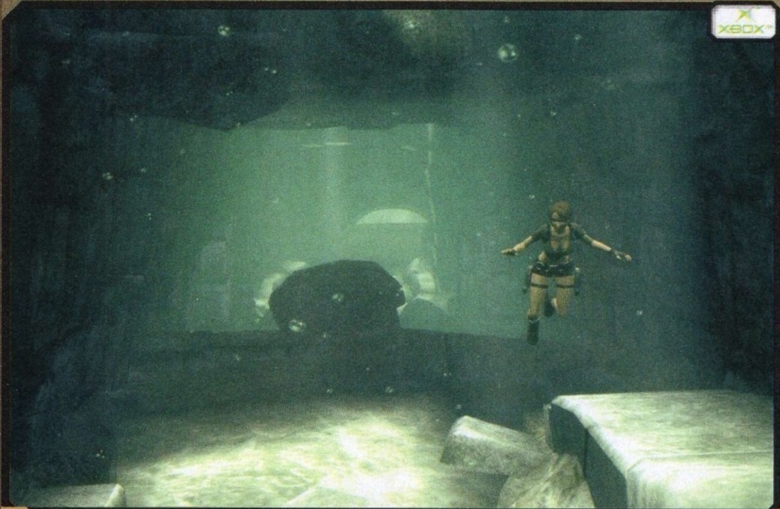
KEEP HER IN THE TOMBS



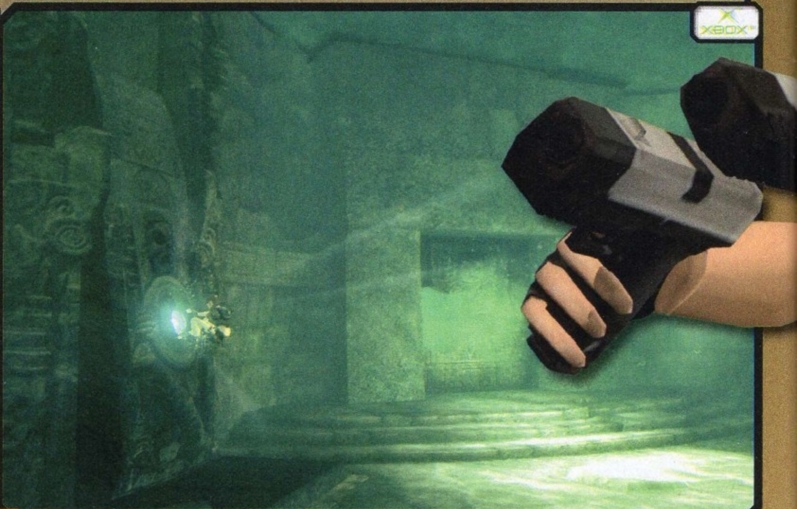
Paris and Prague are both beautiful cities and perfect for weekend breaks, but they're not really for exploration, as they've already been mapped and charted. For real adventure and proper exploration, you can't beat a dusty old tomb set in an exotic location that hasn't had a foot laid in it for thousands of years. And that's where we'll find Lara in *Tomb Raider Legend*.

DIVE TALKIN'

The swimming sections return and are pretty much as you'll remember them, complete with a rapidly emptying air supply bar in the top left of the screen. The water effects are wonderful, though, so you really get the impression of depth, especially as Lara creates clouds of bubbles as she kicks her heels to move forward.



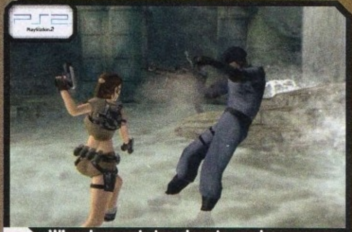
The shafts of light are a welcome sight as if you follow them, you should find the surface and it's at the surface you'll find the oxygen. Cue frantic paddling as the Lara's health starts to deteriorate.



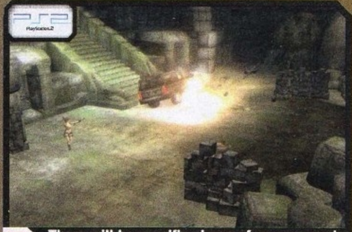
Often you're required to complete a task when underwater, the location of which shouldn't be too hard as there's always visual clues, by that we mean huge glowing diamonds stuck into the walls.

PISTOL WHIP

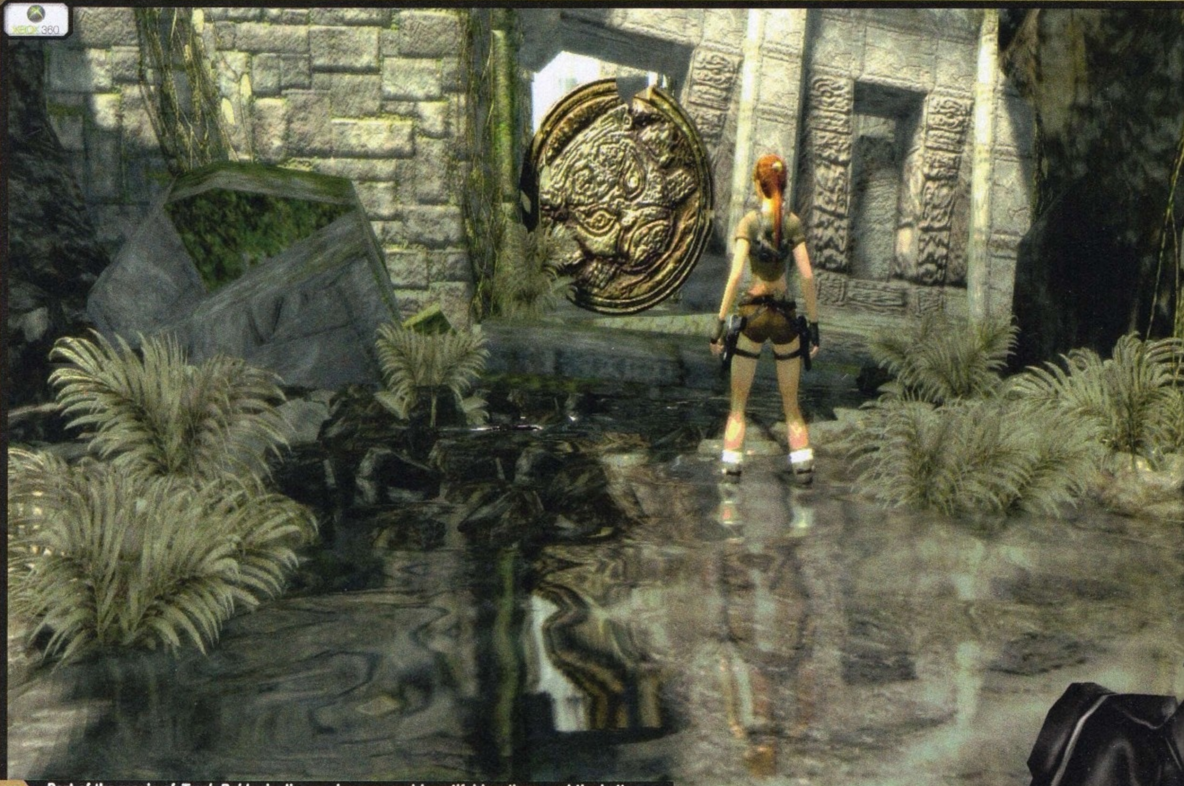
It's estimated that gunplay will take up about a third of the game, and will be kept snappy and spectacular. The game uses an auto-aim system, so you'll be able to move Lara around to avoid being hit, then with the right analogue stick you'll be able to switch between targets. And there's no need to fret about ammo as those famous dual pistols come as standard.



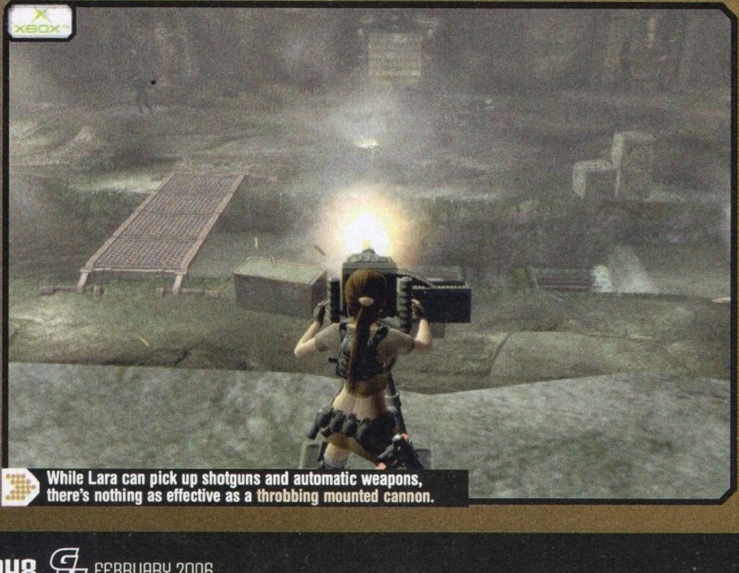
When Lara gets too close to use her weapons, she'll switch to hand to hand combat.



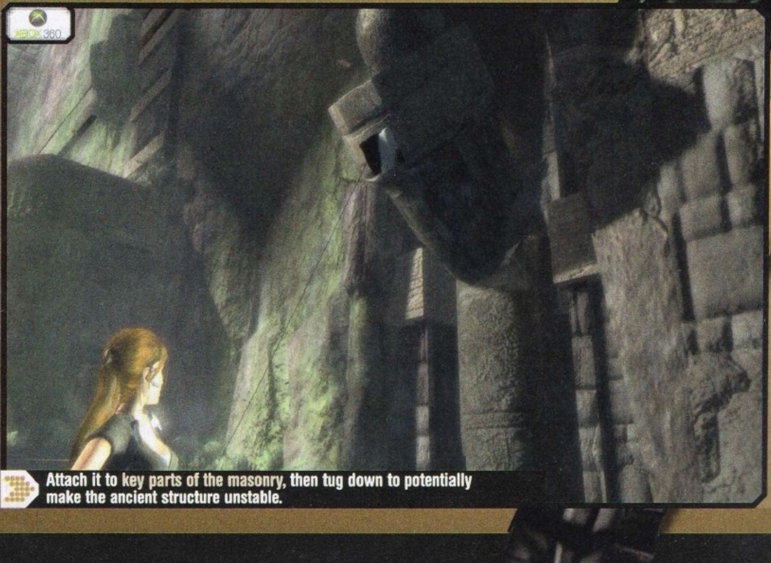
There will be specific pieces of scenery such as weak platform spots that can be targeted.



Part of the magic of *Tomb Raider* is discovering new and beautiful locations, and the better they look the more thrilling they are to find, which means the 360 version should be the best.



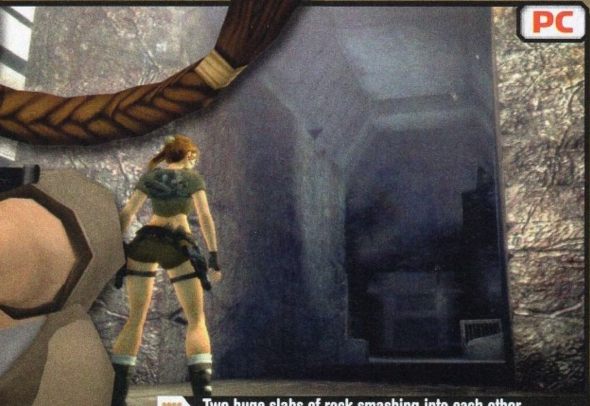
While Lara can pick up shotguns and automatic weapons, there's nothing as effective as a throbbing mounted cannon.



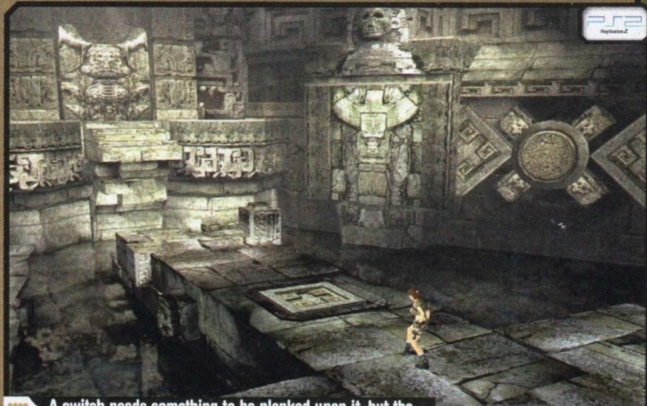
Attach it to key parts of the masonry, then tug down to potentially make the ancient structure unstable.

PUZZLE LIKE A MONKEY

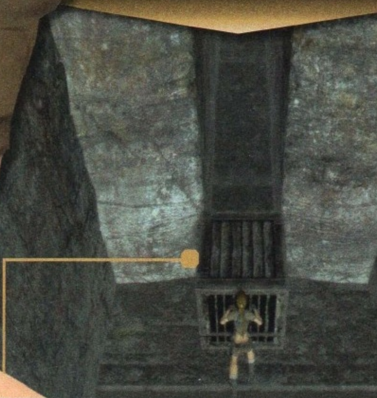
Forget about finding the right stone emblem to shove in the right hole, where *Tomb Raider* comes to life is when the puzzles are part physical, part mental. First you have to discover what has to be achieved and what tools are available. Then it's case of swinging on things, pushing stuff and working out what does what. Put a plan into action with a flowing sequence of leaps and swings, and maybe a statue will be smashed to the floor.



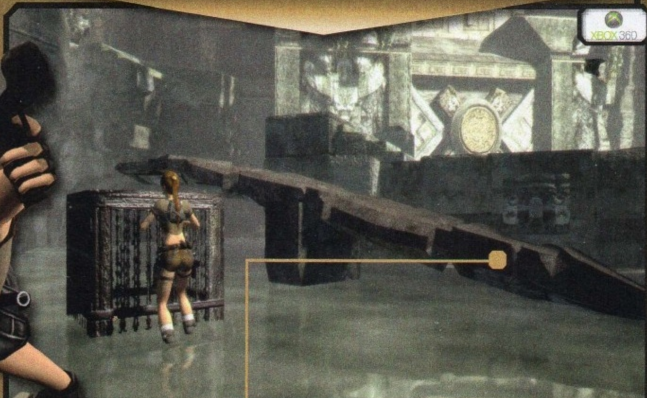
Two huge slabs of rock smashing into each other, threatening to turn any potential passers-by into a puree.



A switch needs something to be plonked upon it, but the only thing available is in the lower level of the tomb.



The solution: shove a sturdy metal cage in-between and pray to God it doesn't buckle under the strain



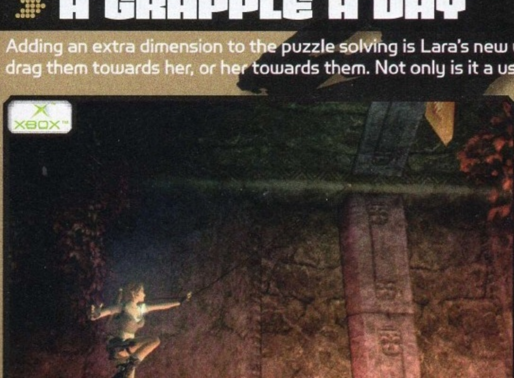
Use this giant slab of rock as a seesaw and propel a rusty old cage through the air onto to the top layer.

It seems the developers want to see Lara wet as there's always loads of the water about.

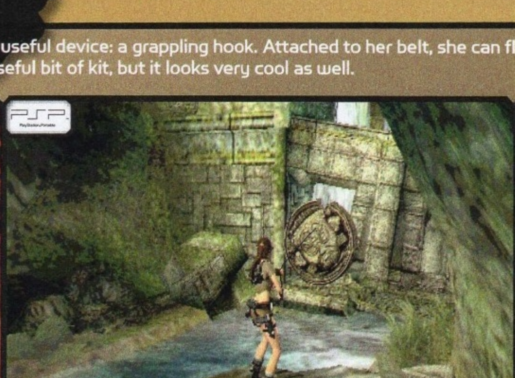
There are no plot details at the moment so we're not sure where *Legend* fits into the series.

A GRAPPLE A DAY

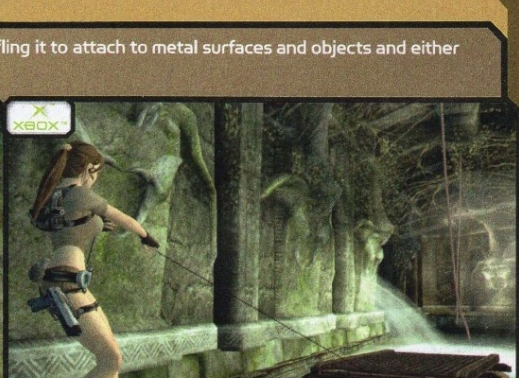
Adding an extra dimension to the puzzle solving is Lara's new useful device: a grappling hook. Attached to her belt, she can fling it to attach to metal surfaces and objects and either drag them towards her, or her towards them. Not only is it a useful bit of kit, but it looks very cool as well.



Leap into the air then fling the grapple hook forwards to swing onto otherwise unreachable part of the tomb.



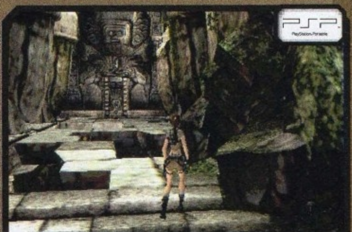
The grapple hook can also be used as a weapon or to actually swipe away guards' weapons and disarm them.



If certain platforms or rafts seem too far away, one twirl of the grapple line and a quick tug can bring them closer.

CUT-SCREAM

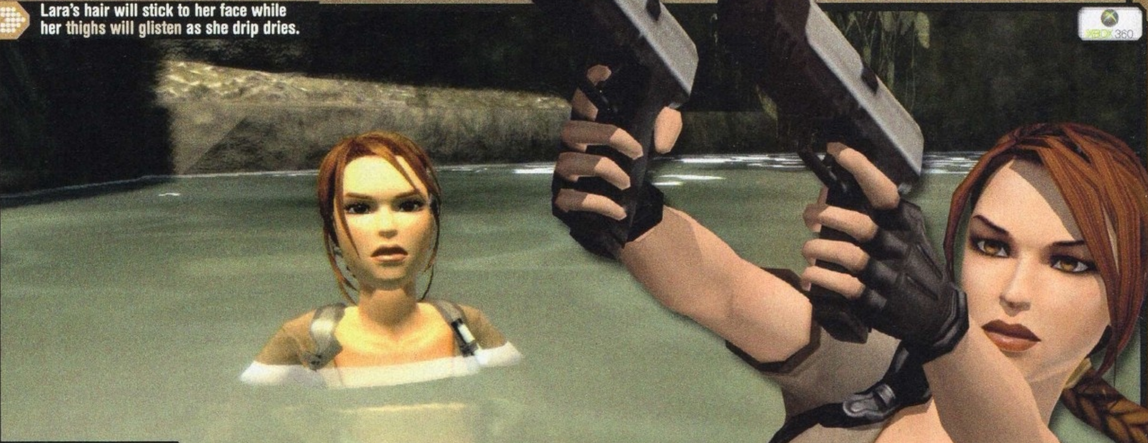
Don't think you can switch off in the cutscenes as you can in *Resident Evil 4* – any negligence will be punished by the Super Action Moments. Just like *Resi*, you'll have your reflexes tested by onscreen demands to press certain action buttons. Fail and Lara will tumble to one of her painful but somehow amusing rag doll deaths.



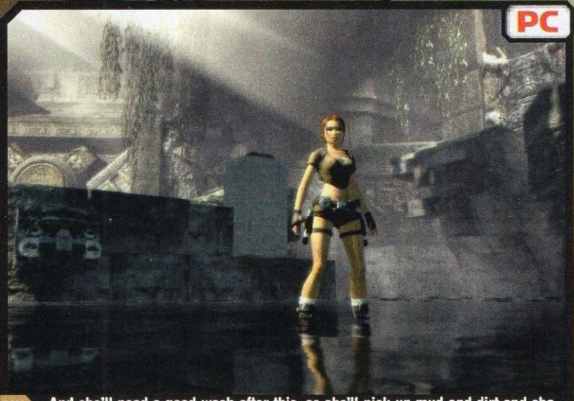
Crossing these stepping stones activates a Moment. Always keep your wits about you.

EASY GLISTENING

There's one effect that might excite some gamers more than others, it concerns Lara's post dip appearance: she's dripping wet. Yes, Lara will be all soggy – skin glistening with moist patches on her pants until she dries in real time.



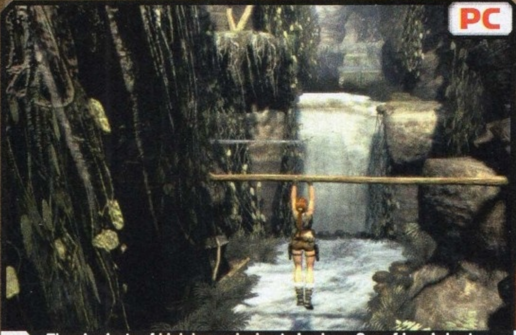
Lara's hair will stick to her face while her thighs will glisten as she drip dries.



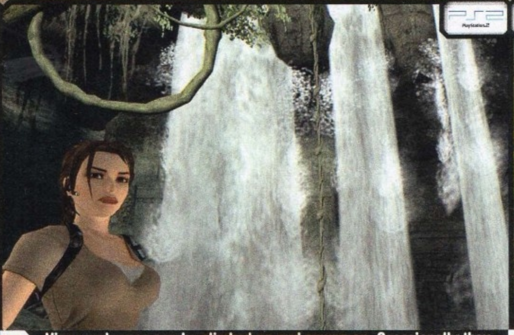
And she'll need a good wash after this, as she'll pick up mud and dirt and she makes her way through the subterranean passages.

CLIMB IS MONEY

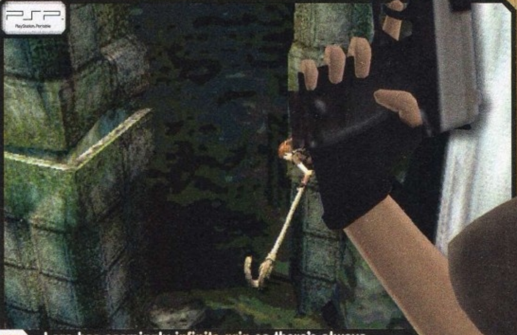
Lara has a tight but flexible move set. The great thing about the control system is that while it is challenging, it isn't fussy. It forgives you if Lara isn't exactly lined up for the next jump, the camera always give you the best angle for the jump and you'll only fall if you've made a mistake, not because you're too close to the edge.



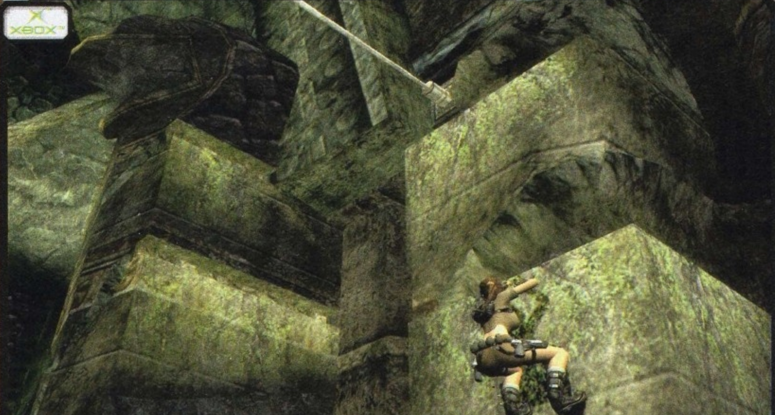
There's plenty of high bar swinging to be done. One of Lara's best moves is being able to change direction mid-swing.



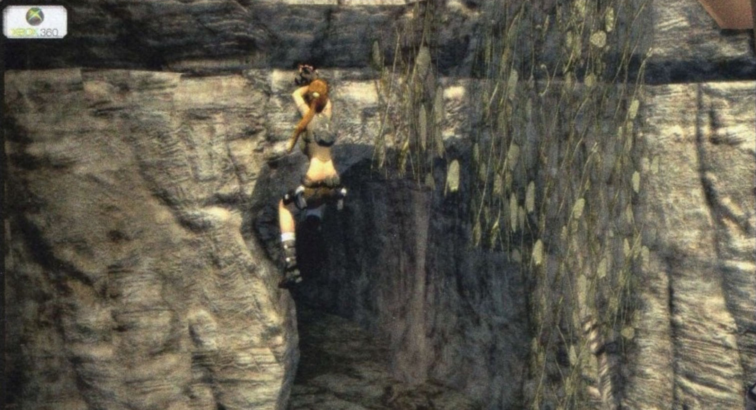
Vines and ropes can be climbed up and swung on. Occasionally they are attached to switches so Lara must use her body weight.



Lara has seemingly infinite grip so there's always time to look around and plan the next move.



Just like a pro-rock climber, Lara can leap up to higher ledges from a climbing position.

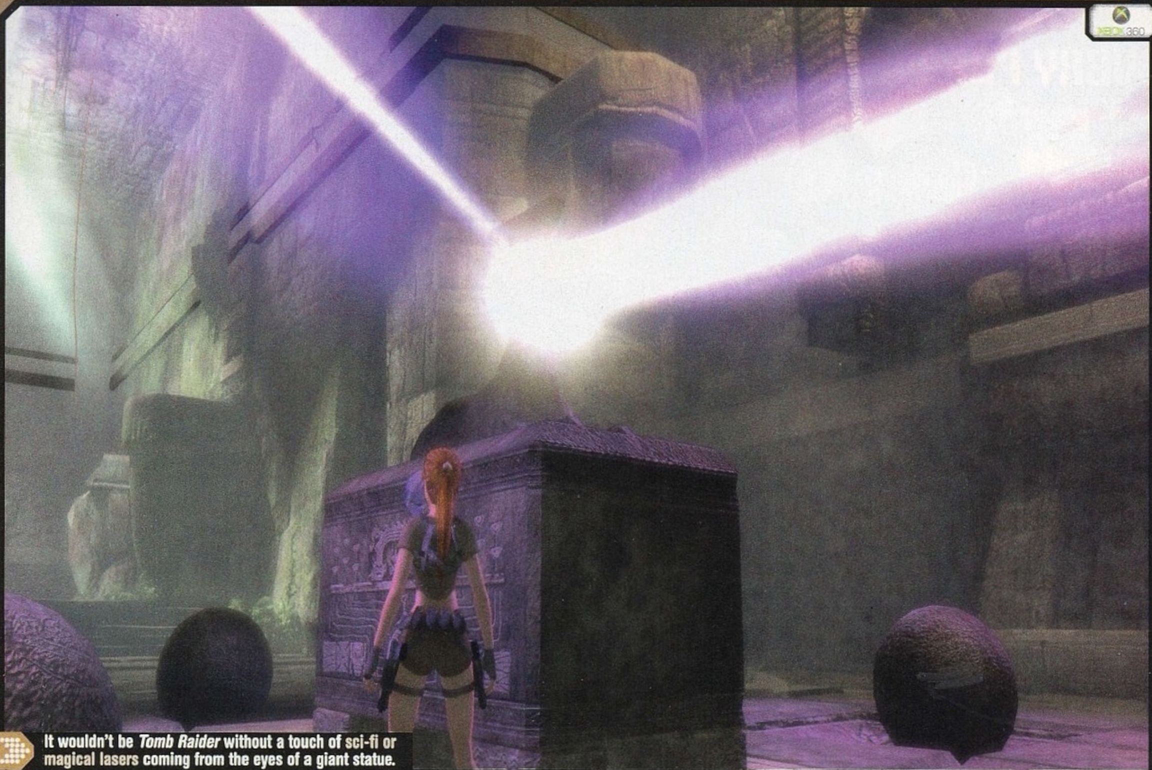


A superb touch is that Lara will always look in the direction she is about to jump in. It's a great visual clue to ensure safe clambering.

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

THE HEART OF DARKNESS

Just as important to the game as a good looking Lara are the authentic and exciting tombs. And thanks to brilliant lighting and particle effects, the ones in *Legend* really feel like no human has been there for hundreds of years. They feel like tiny alien worlds happily existing without any human interference and so are ripe for exploration.



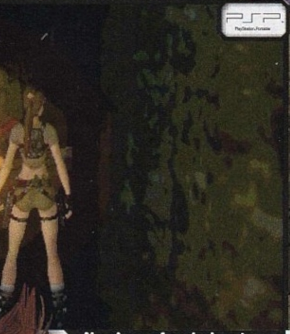
It wouldn't be *Tomb Raider* without a touch of sci-fi or magical lasers coming from the eyes of a giant statue.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

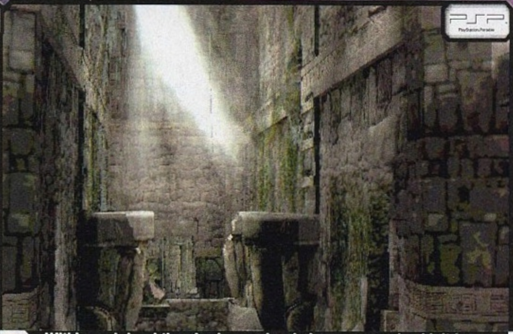
Even though Crystal Dynamics had a daunting task of returning Lara to her iconic status, for us at *GM* and many gamers out there, the task seemed so simple: make *Tomb Raider* fun to play again.

Obviously, this is easier for people who don't have to code or design anything, but there's certain elements that you want from a *Tomb Raider* game – namely 'tombs' and 'the raiding of'. We're not really concerned with how edgy and mature Lara is or what type of rimmed glasses she has; we want huge, contrived puzzles set deep in the earth. We want death defying leaps and rope swings over spike pits. Thankfully that's what *Tomb Raider: Legend* is all about and suddenly the old magic has returned.

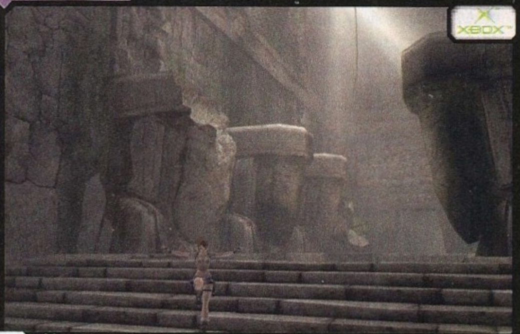
When playing the first ever *Tomb Raider,* you got a tingle of excitement every time a new area was revealed. When the music swelled as the next epic cavern was revealed, the last hour of effort became worth it. That's what you get with *Legend,* but brought fully up to date with a music score that moistens the eye and visuals that genuinely make you gasp.



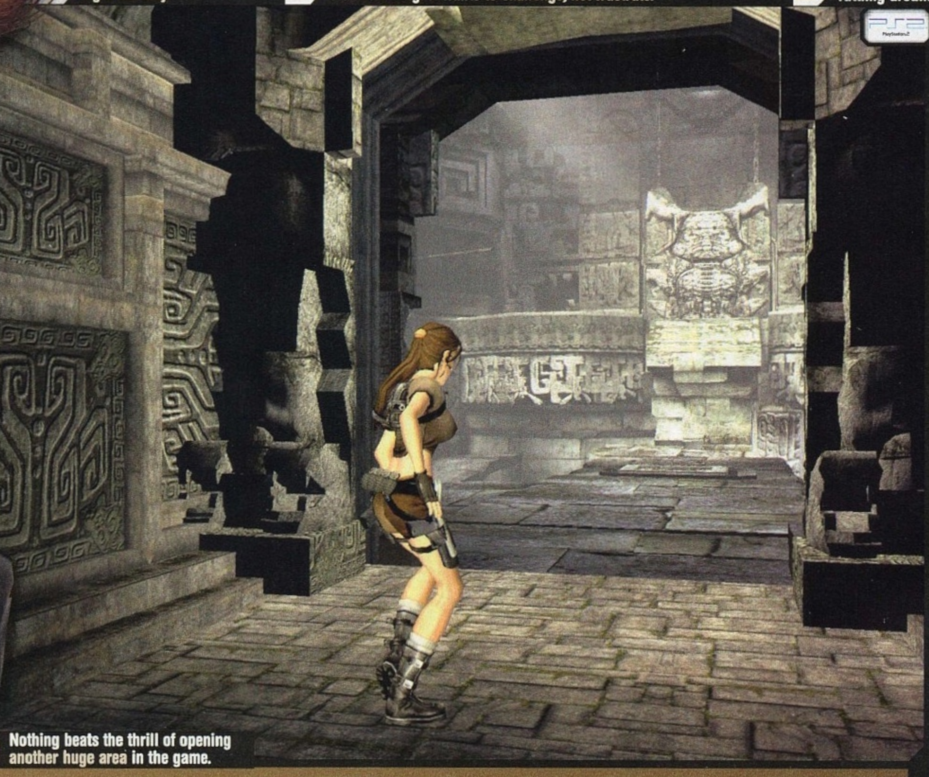
Novel use of explosives to light the way.



Within each level there's always visual clues, so you shouldn't be stuck for long. It wants to challenge, not frustrate.



It's great to see Lara back in exotic and exciting places, rather that rattling around in the sewer of a European city.



Nothing beats the thrill of opening another huge area in the game.

The scale of the levels is beautifully crafted. As you stand on the edge of the waterfall at the start of the Amahlin level, there's a long plunge into the water below to enter the tombs. Once you've tackled the twists and turns of the dark caverns, you exit on to a lush green hill top opposite the start point, allowing you to gloat over how far you've managed to come – an 'I-can-see-my-house-from-here' thrill.

Then there's the pacing with has a wonderful quick-quick-slow tempo – raising the pulse with the 'Super Action Moments', then slowing things down with the brain teasing platforming puzzles. *Tomb Raider* has a pleasant calmness about it when it leaves you alone with three switches, a seesaw, three crates and huge door, then allows you the time and space to experiment and find solutions. It's like Sudoku meets *Indiana Jones.*

Tomb Raider has been faithfully restored to its former glory – Crystal Dynamics has taken an old relic and blown away the cobwebs to rediscover it's original beauty. By using today's technology, it's made the experience feel as refreshing as the opening 100 foot dive into the waterfall looks.

REVIEWS

GamesMaster

✔ EVERY GAME ✔ EVERY FORMAT ✔ EVERY MONTH

REVIEWS ED

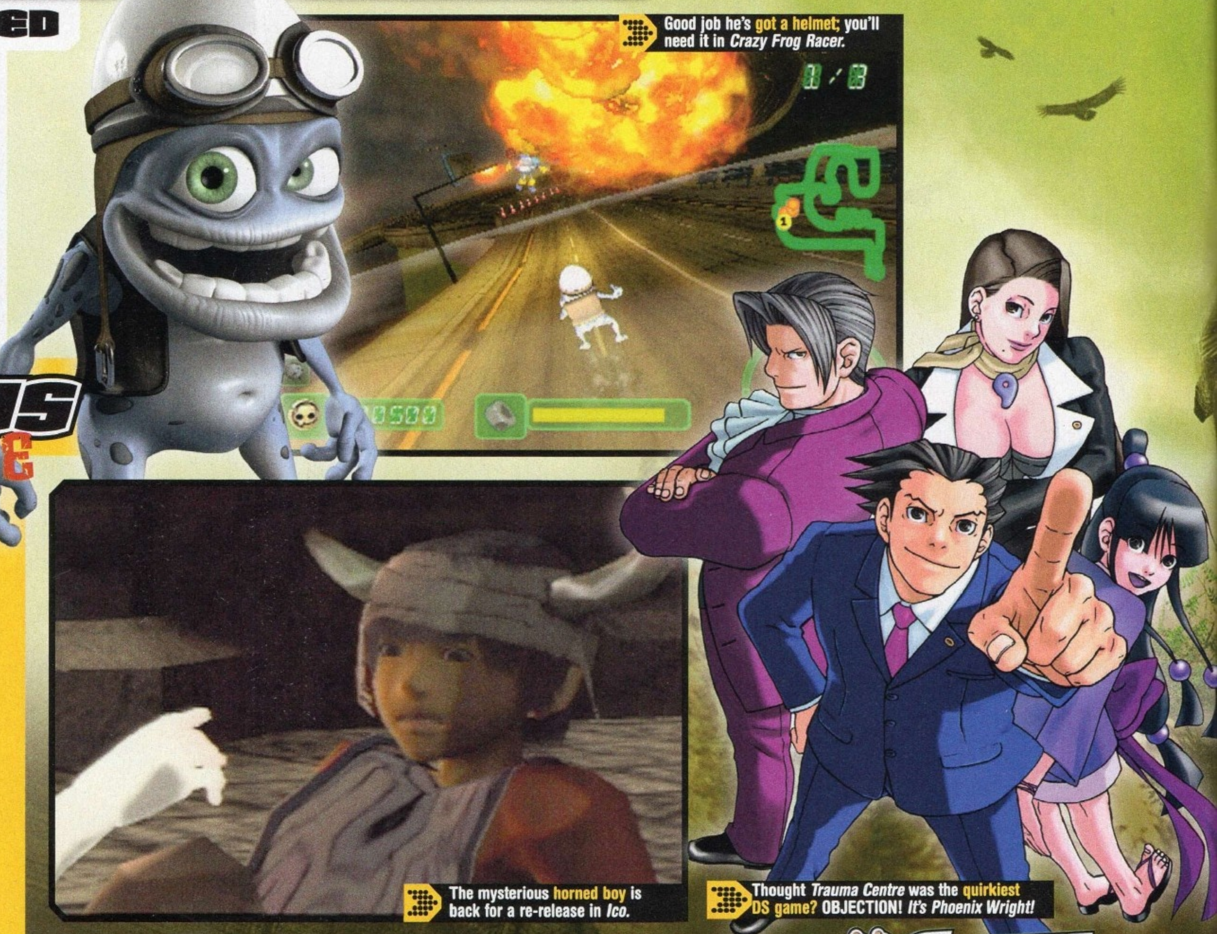
KATH BRICE

Nintendo and Sony stuck middle fingers up at the Xbox 360 this month with some great releases for their consoles. Sony has got not only *Shadow of the Colossus* but also the re-release of one of the most unique games in the history of PS2 – *ICO*. Ninty has released even more quirky but quality DS games – *Mario & Luigi*, *Phoenix Wright* and *Trauma Centre*. With *Dead Or Alive* slipping until the end of January, 360 owners may have to put up with the launch games for longer than they thought.

GM REVIEWS GUARANTEE

Only *GamesMaster* has reviews you can trust. This is why…

- We play and judge games on every format. We're not biased to any particular machine. We're just biased towards good games.
- We only review finished code.
- We only use expert, experienced game players who know what they're talking about.
- We're 100% independent and honest. If a game's bad, we'll say so.
- We show and tell you more about a game than any other mag or web site. No one else crams as much in.
- Games are expensive. We want to make sure you never buy a bad one.



Good job he's got a helmet; you'll need it in *Crazy Frog Racer*.

The mysterious horned boy is back for a re-release in *Ico*.

Thought *Trauma Centre* was the quirkiest DS game? OBJECTION! *It's Phoenix Wright!*

HOW GM'S REVIEWS WORK

Here's a guided tour around the only reviews you should trust.

Other Formats

What's it like on your machine?

XBOX	Link To The Past/Four Swords, The original Zelda co-op, in handheld form.	95%
	The closest alternatives on yo	
CUBE	Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance 2	88%
PC	Final Fantasy XI	90%

Game not reviewed on your console? Check out this box to see how the other versions are coming on, or for the most similar game you can play on your machine right now.

It's crunch time. Here's where you'll find the real deal for every game. Each title is rigorously assessed in three disciplines:

GRAPHICS: What does it look like? Does it move smoothly? Enough variety?

GAMEPLAY: Does the game work? Is it satisfying and fun to play, or a pain in the arse?

LIFESPAN: Is there enough of it? Will you be playing this title for months or mere minutes?

The best and worst things about the game dragged out and held at bullet point!

The final verdict in one snappy soundbite, with the only score that counts at its side. Remember: it's not an average!

JUDGEMENT JEZ

GM LOVES

- + The best co-operative game on the 'Cube and a perfect argument for connectivity
- + Brilliant puzzles that aren't too difficult
- + A cracking adventure for the single player

GM HATES

- – It's a very expensive game to play properly – you'll need four GBAs and link cables for four players
- – It looks like a GBA game a lot of the time

GRAPHICS [illegible]

Cute GBA-type sprites mixed with marvellous special effects.

GAMEPLAY [illegible]

Amazing co-operative gameplay and some ingenious puzzles.

LIFESPAN [illegible]

As a multi-player it could last for months, but not so long on your own.

OVERALL 89%

Play with three mates with GBA's, and you've got one of the best games on the 'Cube.

REVIEWS ▪ **OUT:** NOW ▪ **FORMAT:** GC **PRICE:** £39.99 ▪ **DEVELOPER:** NINTENDO ▪ **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO ▪ **SPECIAL:** GBA, LINK CABLE ▪ **OTHER FORMATS:** GBA ▪ **CALL:** 01932 895390 ▪ **PLAYERS:** 1-4

WHAT IS IT? Brilliant puzzle-laden four-player Zelda action that uses GBA connectivity.

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: The first five minutes of play. Learn the ropes, kill monsters, burn grass!

You may not believe me, but I'm a former castle guard! A professional adventurer.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: Final Fantasy Origins, 83%
WORSE THAN: Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker, 97%
WAIT FOR: The new 'adult' Zelda
BEST PRICE: £29.99, amazon.co.uk

Find out if the game's on your machine. We'll show every format it's set for, with the arrow showing you which version we've reviewed.

Your 'at a glance' guide to the game and its main features. First-person or third-person? How many levels? Bosses? You'll find it here.

Your instant look at some in- game action so you know how it plays. If it's a slower strategy game we'll show you how it all works.

Still undecided after reading the review? This box tells you about anything better or worth waiting for, and the cheapest place to buy it.

GAMESMASTER GOLD AWARD

GM's badge of gaming greatness is only given to classic games. If a game gets one of these it's an essential purchase.

THE SCORE

90 TO 100%
Tippety top cream of the crop. If you own the console, buy this!

80 TO 89%
A great game. If you like the sound of it, you should get it in.

70 TO 79%
Neat enough but a little lacking. Still, if you really must have it…

60 TO 69%
A game scuppered by an annoying flaw or two. Shame.

50 TO 59%
Above average but only just. Spend your cash elsewhere.

40 TO 49%
Quite simply not very good. We played it – we didn't like it.

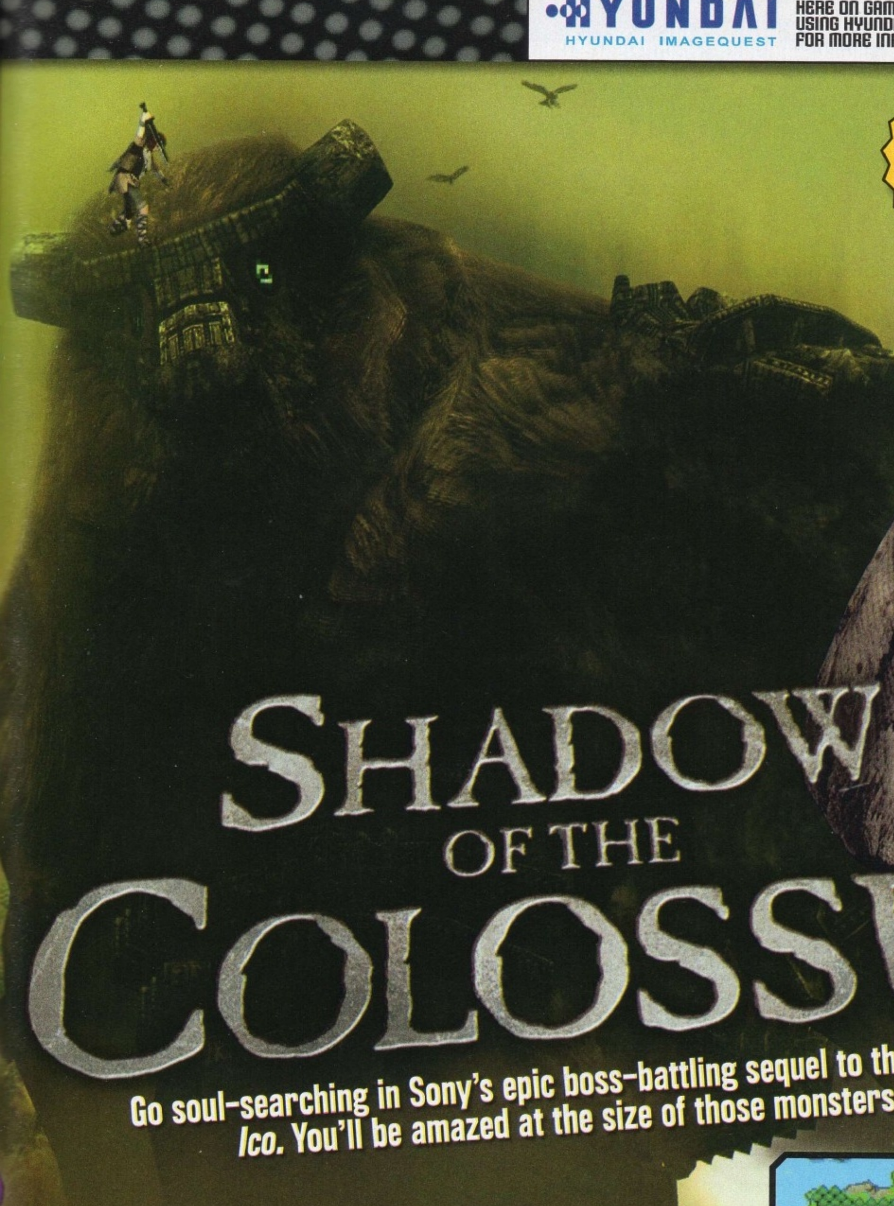
30 TO 39%
Oh dear. Perhaps the programmers should play some 'games'.

20 TO 29%
What the…?! This looks awful and plays awful as well.

10 TO 19%
Not a videogame at all but a device of mental torture.

0 TO 9%
Like dangling your diddlies in a mincing machine.

HYUNDAI
HYUNDAI IMAGEQUEST
HERE ON GAMESMASTER WE PLAY ALL OUR GAMES USING HYUNDAI IMAGEQUEST TVS AND MONITORS. FOR MORE INFO GO TO WWW.HYUNDAIQ.COM.



p.74 Best Scrapping Game
Crash some skulls with your homies in this Namco punch-em-up, *Urban Reign*

SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

Go soul-searching in Sony's epic boss-battling sequel to the magical *Ico*. You'll be amazed at the size of those monsters...

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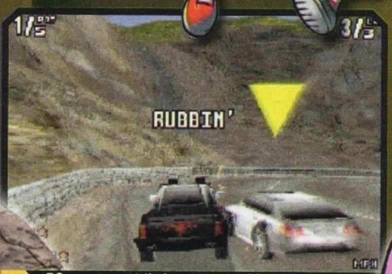
p.59 Best Brothers in a Game!
They may be small, but Mario & Luigi are perfectly formed in *Partners in Time*

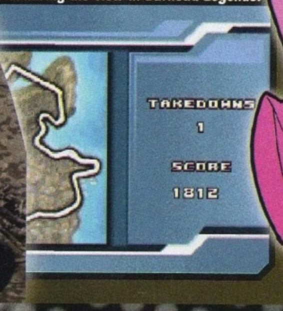
It might be in Japanese but we tell you how good *Pokémon Mysterious Dungeon* is nonetheless

リンガー「……というワケで オレは
せいれいの おかへ いったんだ。

Stroke these simians with your stylus! It's *Monkey Ball* on the DS!.



DS owners get their go at smashing up expensive cars while admiring the view in *Burnout: Legends*.



Best online PS2 game? Engage review-o-goggles for *SOCOM 3*!

Viewtiful Joe's back and ready to rumble on GameCube!

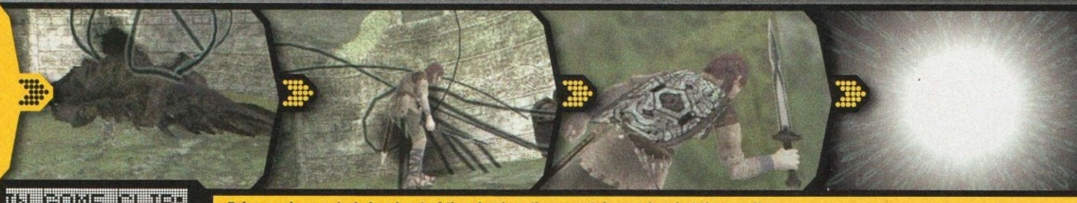
- **OUT:** 1ST FEBRUARY
- **FORMAT:** PS2
- **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** SCEJ
- **PUBLISHER:** SONY
- **ONLINE:** NO
- **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE
- **WEB:** WWW.SHADOWOFTHECOLOSSUS.COM
- **PLAYERS:** 1

WHAT IS IT?

Almost indescribably unique adventure from the team behind *Ico*.

- Bumper battles with monsters they don't call Colossus for nothing
- Find the weak spots on 16 Colossi

HOW IT PLAYS!



IN GAME CLIP:

Bring each monster's head out of the clouds – then scratch your head at the results...

SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

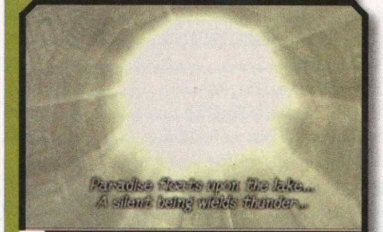
Land of the giants – but not for long...

SPEECHLESS

Colossus is about as chatty as a Tesco cashier. The lead character only speaks in one cutscene, and even the manual only gives you a paragraph of backstory before shutting up.

You. The strong, silent type. Although the hair is in touch with its feminine side.

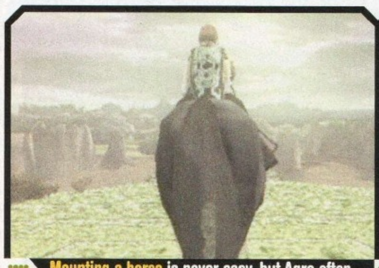
Words aren't usually allowed on-screen – so the telly can overflow with eye-love.


Paradise floats upon the lake...
A silent being wields thunder...

When words do appear, they're annoyingly – and amusingly – 'olde worlde'.

FOUR LEGS GOOD

Agro's the best videogame horse since *Ocarina of Time's* Epona. He never gets tired, animates nicely even when you race him nose-first into a wall, has a lovely arse, and an endearing habit of running away at Grand National speeds when a Colossus strays too close.



Mounting a horse is never easy, but Agro often lives up to his name and makes things difficult.

Why the long face? Because we'll be slapping the beast to get him moving in a minute.

Yell 'Agro!' and the magical steed will find you wherever you are on the map. Good boy.

We're in trouble here. How do you write four pages on a game from the *Ico* team that's basically an eleven-hour series of boss battles with nothing in between but a man on a horse in a field?

And how do we convince you that if you like your games big, beautiful and eye-burstingly epic, *Shadow of the Colossus* – a vast map that's empty except for 16 ogres with grass growing on their backs – is one of the best games you'll ever play? Well, we could start with the plot. No pec-thumping warriors or arch-eyebrowed villains here: *Shadow of the Colossus* proves that less really is more, with gentle cutscenes that cast a mysterious, magical spell over the proceedings.

All you know for most of the game is that your nameless hero needs to kill 16 Colossi to bring his dead girlfriend back to life. The game refuses to even hint at the story's outcome, filling you with the kind of wary trepidation that can only be cured by a truly brilliant ending. *Shadow* has it: and the tears will be splashing onto your joypad.

We'd better explain, too, how a game that's nothing but bosses actually works. In *Colossus*, you're standing on the shoulders of giants. And the necks, heads, backs, legs, etc. Each massive monster has a weak spot, thankfully, and the only way to reach it is to clamber up its furry bits, clinging on while the Colossus writhes and shakes you about like a flag in a thunderstorm.

GIANT SLAYER

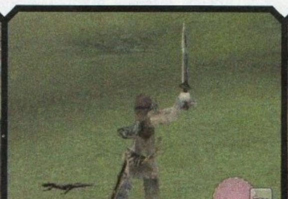
Luckily, your hero could out-acrobat

➤

SHADOW CABINET

Weapons cabinet, that is. As the mysterious voice in the cathedral says, mere mortals can't defeat the Colossi. Oddly, though, a mere mortal with a map, a small sword and a wooden bow can. That's the power of videogames, kids.

The sword's your key damage-dealer. Charge up, plunge, hurt.



Scared of big monsters? Desensitize yourself by killing lizards.

The blade's unusual second function: Colossus-detecting radar.

The bow is chargeable too, but not so useful for giant-killing.

Arrows are best used to show deadly monster-birds you're angry.

And, of course, little lizards prove to be thoroughly un-arrow-proof.

TALL TALE

Once upon time, a girl died. The end? Not if her brave boyfriend has anything to do with it.

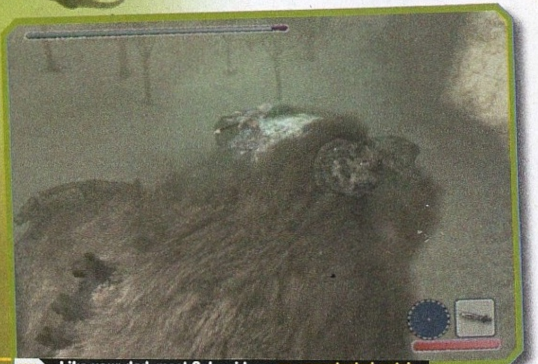
He's brought her to the right place: a voice inside the ceiling reveals he can revive his girlfriend after all.

The method: slice and dice the land's lumbering Colossi that roam around. The temple's statues crumble...

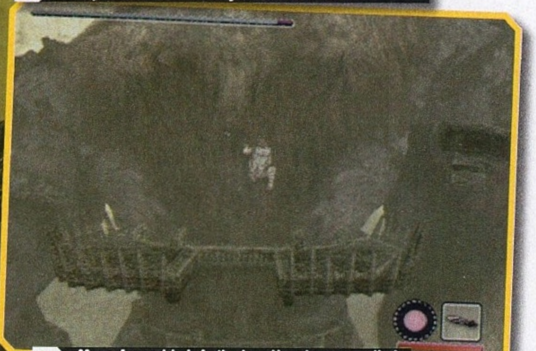
... and the unconscious hero is circled by mysterious dark figures. There's more mystery here than *Lost*.

KILLING BIG

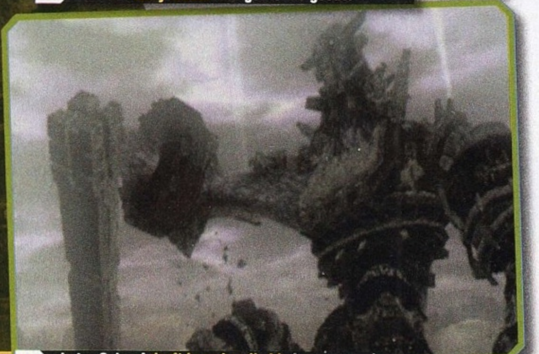
This is what you're up against. One normal-sized man, versus the biggest and hairiest lumbering giant of a monster since Brian Blessed. Lucky they build weak spots into these things.



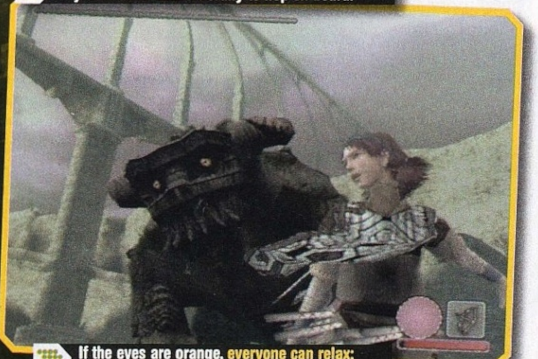
Like your dad, most Colossi have an unprotected patch on top of their heads. But you have to reach it.



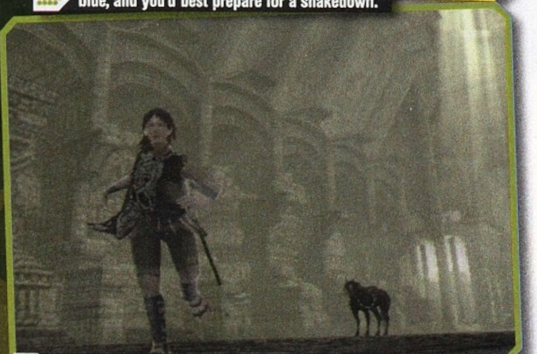
Moss, fur and hair is the key. Your hero can climb it like a furry ladder and get to the goods.



Later Colossi don't have handholds in easy reach – you need to think laterally to hop on board.



If the eyes are orange, everyone can relax; blue, and you'd best prepare for a shakedown.



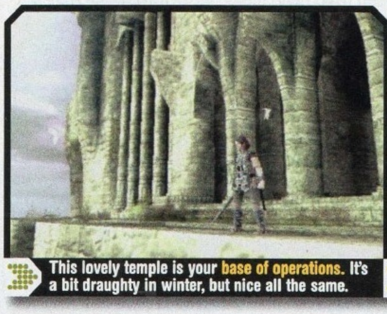
You know how to whistle, don't you? Just put your lips together and... look out! Ruuuun!

"YOU'RE STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS. AND THE NECKS, HEADS..."

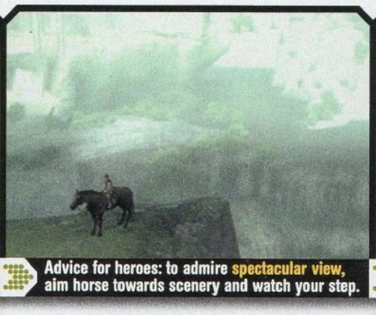
A forest any Lord of the Rings movie would be proud of. Magical.

WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD

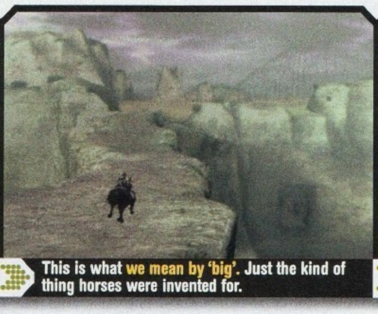
Colossus's world is empty except for the odd strolling tortoise – but its size and beauty are such that we've asked Sony if we can move in. Screen-burning sunlight streams down on the central plains, the waterfall tumbles impressively, and some kind soul has left save points in case anyone happens to die at the paws of one of those tortoises.



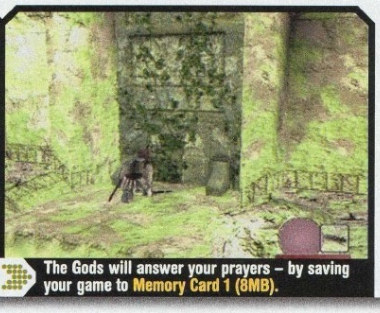
This lovely temple is your base of operations. It's a bit draughty in winter, but nice all the same.



Advice for heroes: to admire spectacular view, aim horse towards scenery and watch your step.

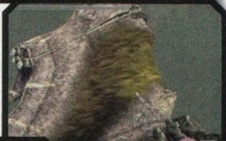


This is what we mean by 'big'. Just the kind of thing horses were invented for.

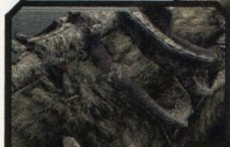


The Gods will answer your prayers – by saving your game to Memory Card 1 (8MB).

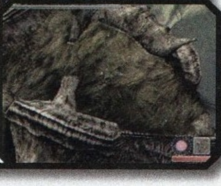
MOVE IT



Feeling fat and slow after Christmas? *Shadow's* agile hero will depress you. See him cling!



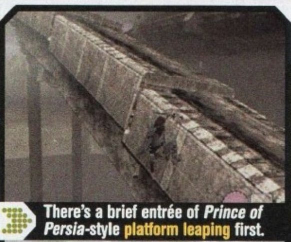
See him crouch! This revives your health. Try it in real life: it doesn't work.



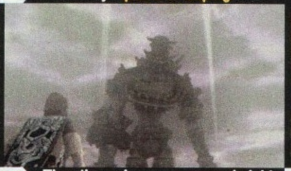
Crouching also ensures you're ready for more clinging later. It's a rough ride.

PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY

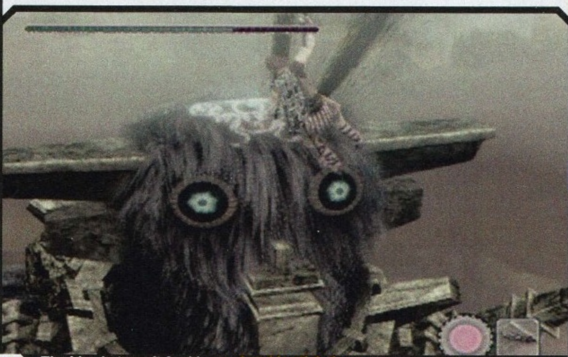
Colossus 3 is a giant challenge: he's found himself a 50-ft tall pillar of metal, and he keeps trying to shake your hand with it.



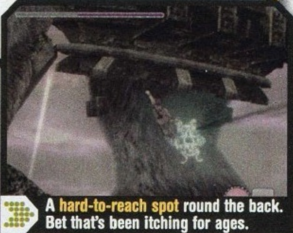
There's a brief entrée of *Prince of Persia*-style platform leaping first.



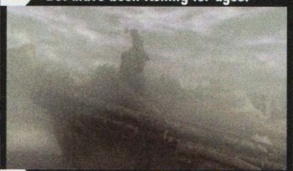
Then the main course: around eight thousand tons of living metal. Gulp.



The idea is to wait for him to slam his stick down, then run up its length. You can them clamber up his arm and plunge your sword into his thinking box.



A hard-to-reach spot round the back. Bet that's been itching for ages.



That's the end of Colossus 3. Let's hope we don't have to clean the mess.

the *Prince of Persia,* managing to leap, tumble and grab with astonishing smoothness as a living earthquake rumbles and rolls beneath him.

It's unlike anything you've ever played: think of as a puzzle-platformer with a time limit – played on top of battleship-sized brutes made of hair, metal and black blood. Every Colossus is essentially a 'little' level of its own, and massively satisfying to complete.

CAUGHT BY THE FUZZ

As you rack up the Colossi corpses, you'll need more skill to latch on to the monsters without falling off, and more thought to work out how to actually reach its grabbable fuzzies. Every battle of man versus monster is a thunderous, majestic screen-smasher of a slog that makes you scared, excited, intimidated and all-powerful all at once.

You're interested now, we can tell. And from the screenshots, you'll already have guessed that *Shadow of the Colossus* is a beautiful thing. Even if vast sun-drenched plains and *gigantic* rock bridges suspended over gorgeous lakes aren't your thing, the Colossi will take your breath away. The PS2 wheezes and splutters as it brings them to life: things can get jerky as the screen fills up. But there's never been anything like this on your console: stomping, roaring creatures almost as big as other game's entire *levels,* their plodding pace and headphone-shattering noise making you feel like you're picking a fight with a walking skyscraper. It's a hell of a show.

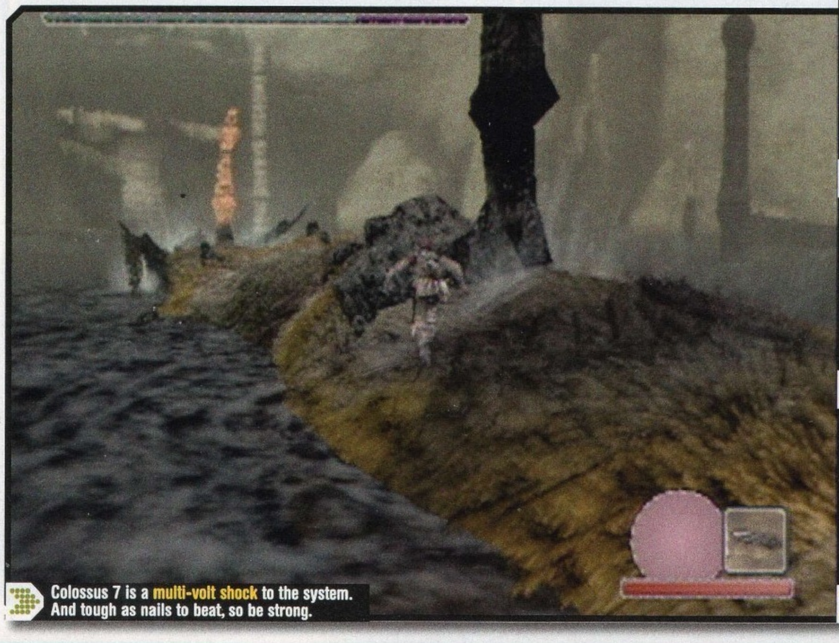
BRUTE STRENGTH

So that's the game pretty much fully described – and we've still got half the review to go. Lucky we've got some negatives to talk about. *Colossus* is, in some ways, a frustrating experience. Short text hints pop up if you're stumped, but they're annoyingly vague – for the most part it's just you and your brain, struggling to puzzle out a Colossus's weak point while the beast busily gets on with smashing your face in with a massive iron bar.

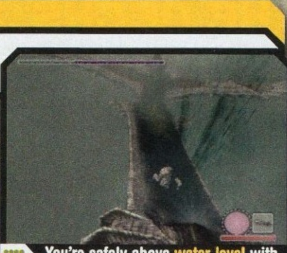
The thrill of discovery is the whole *point* of the game, of course. But it's mad that you can spend *hours* circling a Colossus with no idea what to do, or – like us – wait a full 30 minutes for a boss to maneouvre into the right position for a killing. We even managed

H2WOAH

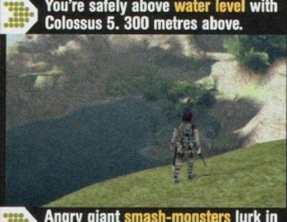
Scared of water? You will be. With clunky camera controls and a hero who swims at the speed as a dying water vole, going for a dip with a Colossus is not something you'll look forward to.



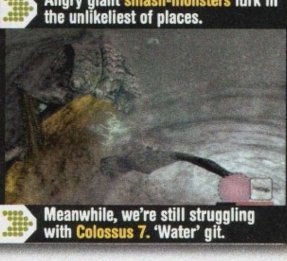
Colossus 7 is a multi-volt shock to the system. And tough as nails to beat, so be strong.



You're safely above water level with Colossus 5. 300 metres above.



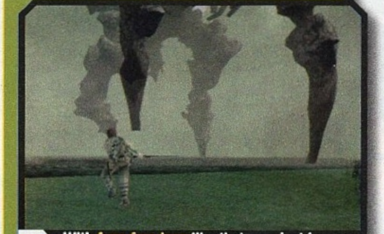
Angry giant smash-monsters lurk in the unlikeliest of places.



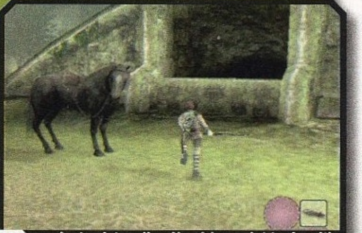
Meanwhile, we're still struggling with Colossus 7. 'Water' git.

GOING FOURTH

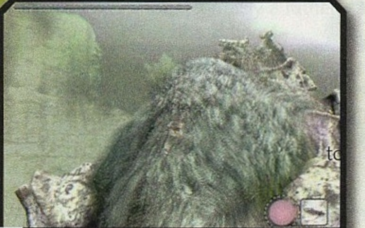
Colossus 4 is a strange one, but we're going to go all *Question of Sport* on you and only show you sections of it. Half the fun of *Colossus* is meeting the monsters for yourself.



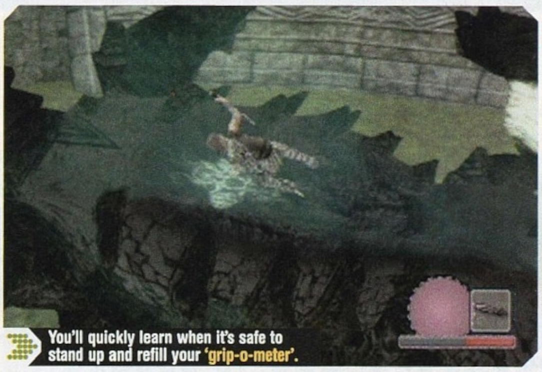
With **fuzz-free legs** like that, you just know Colossus 4 isn't for climbing.



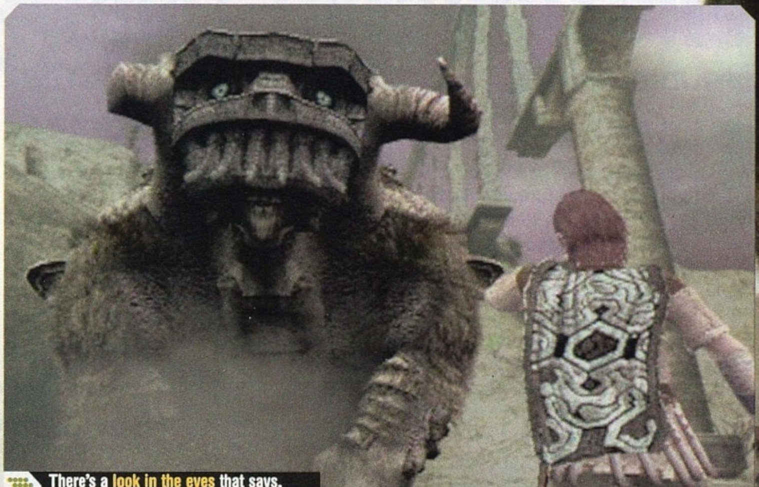
... instead, toppling No. 4 has a lot to do with **running away** and hiding, thank god.



The poor soul's gone overboard on the **blue hair dye** and the volumiser.



You'll quickly learn when it's safe to stand up and refill your **'grip-o-meter'**.



There's a **look in the eyes** that says, "Please don't kill me." We did anyway.

topple one monster without quite realising what we did right.

GRAND DESIGNS

It's not helped by the occasional fiddliness of scaling a mountain that just won't keep still. The game sometimes gets confused about where 'platforms' begin and end, cursing you to several blood-boilingly frustrating seconds of frantic button-stabbing as your grip-o-meter falls dangerously low. The camera's all over the shop, too. That's not necessarily the game's fault –keeping both a 100-metre tall terror and an average-sized man in frame isn't always easy. But it's often slower to react than you might like, given that you're being chased by a sheep-monster the size of a battleship.

But. Despite those problems, and the fact that *Shadow of the Colossus* has no smallers enemies, no towns, no dungeons, no levelling up, no power-ups, no extra weapons apart from a wooden stick – it's genius. Concentrating on the boss battles has allowed Sony to create a real *atmosphere* – present in everything from the menacing rumble of the wind to the way you can give your horse a reassuring pat – that makes *Colossus* a game that stays with you long, long after it's over.

MAGIC MOMENTS

So, at last we made it. Four pages on a game that you could easily describe on a postage stamp – and all done while carefully tip-toeing around the game's specifics.

Because *Shadow of the Colossus* has the kind of magic that you should discover for yourself. Not should: GM

> "GIVEN THAT YOU'RE BEING CHASED BY A SHEEP-MONSTER THE SIZE OF A BATTLESHIP"

Other Formats

The closest alternatives on your console:

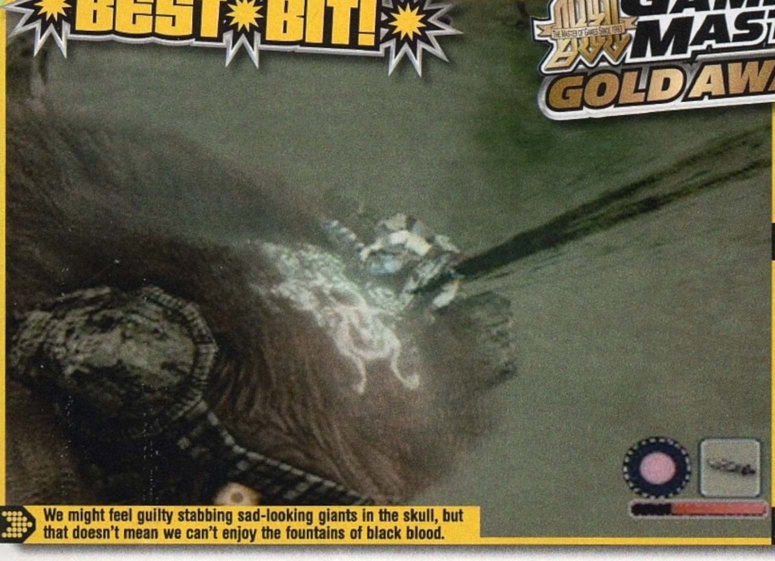
XBOX *King Kong* has a similar sense of in-your-face epicness 70%

PC Final Fantasy 11........92%

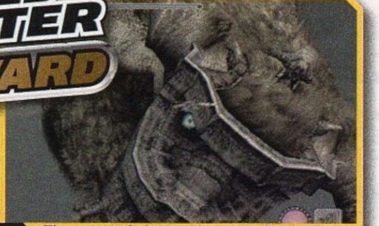
CUBE Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time...86%

BEST BIT!

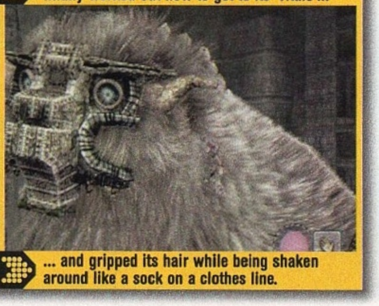
GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD



We might feel guilty stabbing sad-looking giants in the skull, but that doesn't mean we can't enjoy the fountains of black blood.



The geyser of giant gunk comes after you've finally worked out how to get to its 'vitals'...



... and gripped its hair while being shaken around like a sock on a clothes line.

JUDGEMENT

MARK

GM LOVES

- + Horsing about in a world bigger than our minds can take
- + That "Aha!" moment when you devise a Colossus' demise

GM HATES

- - Fiddly climbing controls
- - Long hours of blank-minded frustration

GRAPHICS [illegible]

If you're not impressed by this, you've forgotten to switch your telly on.

GAMEPLAY [illegible]

The thrills never let up – but a big box of boss battles won't be for everyone.

LIFESPAN [illegible]

Unless you *really* luck out, there's at least eleven hours of game here.

OVERALL

91%

A gigantic experience. Whether you played *Ico* or not – lose yourself in the *Shadow*.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:..................King Kong, 70%
WORSE THAN: ....God of War, 94%
WAIT FOR:.................... nothing comes close
BEST PRICE:......£29.98, simplygames.com

• OUT: NOW **• FORMAT:** DS **• PRICE:** £34.99 **• DEVELOPER:** ALPHA DREAM
• PUBLISHER: NINTENDO **• ONLINE:** NO **• OTHER FORMATS:** NONE **• WEB:** WWW.NINTENDO.CO.UK **• PLAYERS:** 1

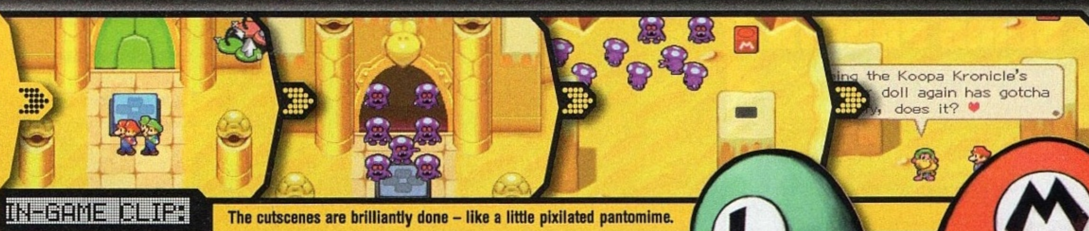
DS

WHAT IS IT?

The sequel to *Mario and Luigi: Superstar Saga.* Take the Mario Bros back in time to rescue the princess from a bunch of aliens.

• Control all four bros (babies and adults) simultaneously

HOW IT PLAYS!



IN-GAME CLIP: The cutscenes are brilliantly done – like a little pixilated pantomime.

MARIO & LUIGI: PARTNERS IN TIME

Double trouble with the baby-sitting Bros...

It's not often that a game makes you laugh. And by that we mean *really* laugh. You know, the kind of laughter that gets funny looks from anyone unlucky enough to be sat next to you on the train. The kind that, with each little chuckle, makes people think you're, you know – a bit *mental.*

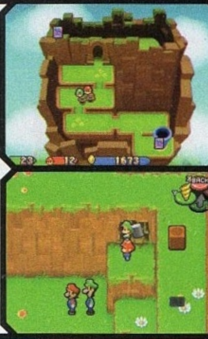
A good start of *Partners in Time* then. Just like its predecessor, *Superstar Saga,* it's not just a celebration of all things Mario, it's a real class act in terms of dialogue, scripting and story. An excuse for Nintendo to poke fun at their best loved mascot (and friends) and deliver something that feels extraordinarily fresh.

At it's heart though, it's a pretty simplistic RPG. You have usual trappings - a central hub of sorts, diverse locations to explore which end – perhaps a little too predictably – in the obligatory 'dungeon' and boss. Yeah, so there's nothing original in that structure, and to be perfectly honest, as RPG's go it's a very linear experience – but it's the execution that really *shines* here.

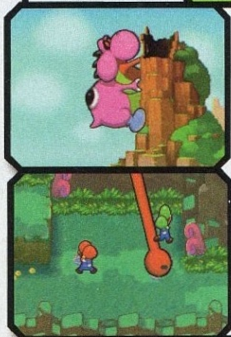
HOWDY PARNTER

Traversing each location isn't just a case of blundering around a vast environment, looking for battles to boost XP, or searching for the next doorway – the world is much smaller and tightly designed than that. Each area of the overall map for every main location is basically a series of puzzles (and in some cases one giant puzzle). This makes each

TOP TO BOTTOM

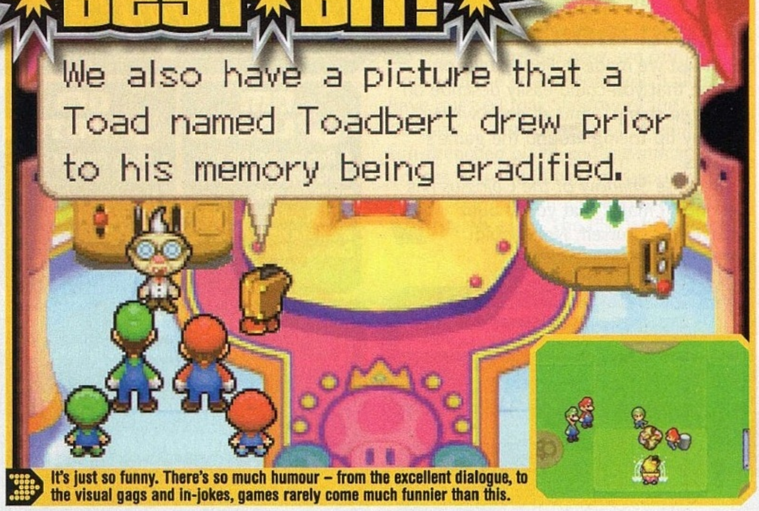


The most basic use of the dual screens is pretty unimaginative – it just shows you a map of the location or dungeon you're currently in. Unfortunately, it's pretty vague (it doesn't show much in the way of detail or anything) so it's not much help...



...however, where the two screens really come into their own, is for the game's puzzles and particularly the excellent cutscenes, where you get two views of the same event. In this case it's an attack from a giant Yoshi.

BEST BIT!



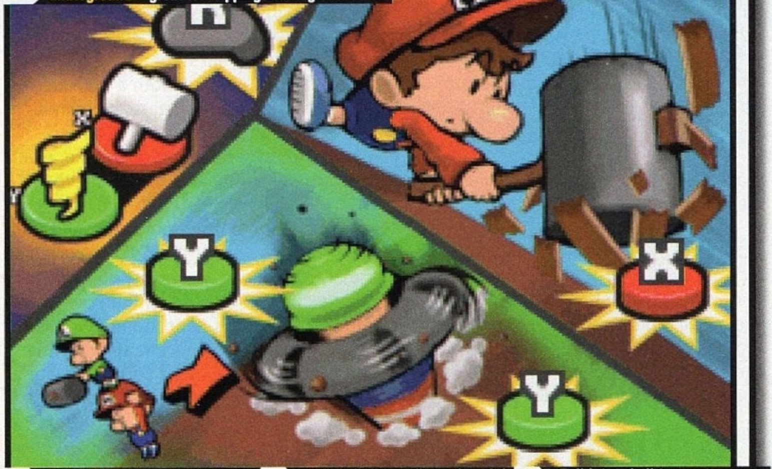
We also have a picture that a Toad named Toadbert drew prior to his memory being eradified.

It's just so funny. There's so much humour – from the excellent dialogue, to the visual gags and in-jokes, games rarely come much funnier than this.

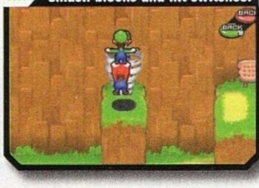
BUST A MOVE

The majority of the puzzles revolve around you using the Brother's special skills – which you earn as the game progresses. These are essential for reaching new areas.

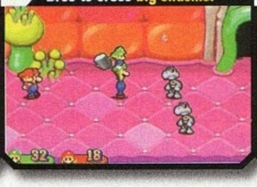
The first skill you earn allows the babies to **tunnel underground** – great for slipping under gates.



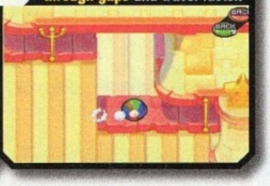
Baby Mario's hammer lets you smash blocks and hit switches.



This spin jump allows the adult Bros to cross **big chasms.**

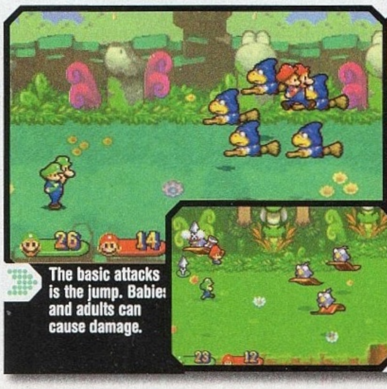


Roll into a ball to **squeeze through gaps** and travel faster.

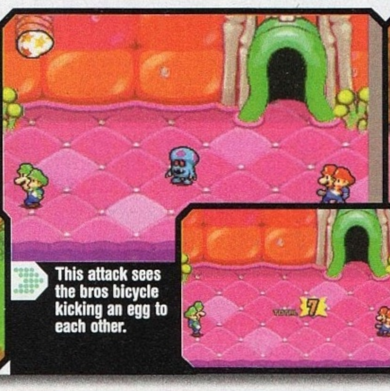


ACTION STATIONS

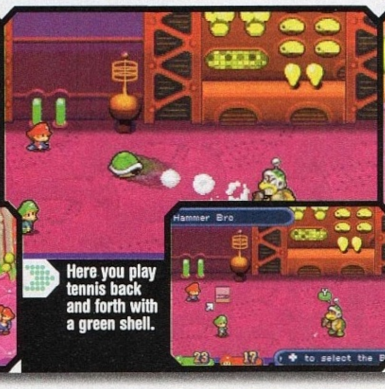
While you're immersed in battle you can't just sit back and let each turn run it's course – you really have to concentrate to maximise the potential damage you deal out. And it can cause a bit of a headache if you're not paying attention. This is a game that really demands your full concentration.



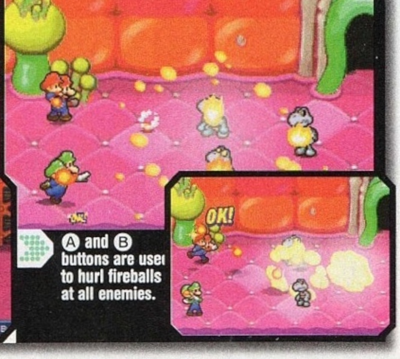
The basic attacks is the jump. Babies and adults can cause damage.



This attack sees the bros bicycle kicking an egg to each other.

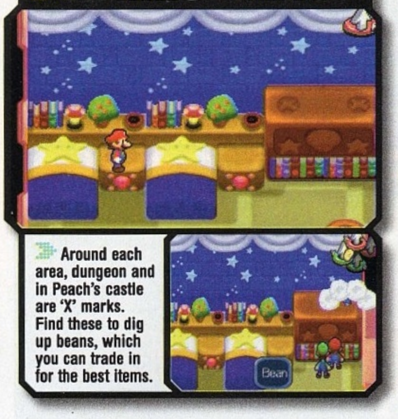


Here you play tennis back and forth with a green shell.



Ⓐ and Ⓑ buttons are used to hurl fireballs at all enemies.

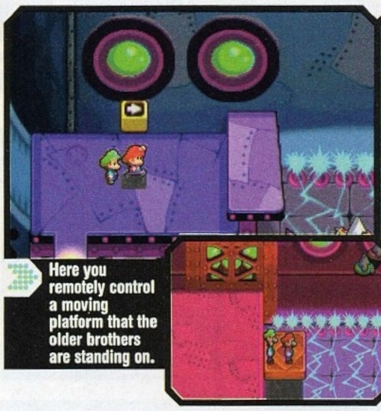
BEANIE BABIES



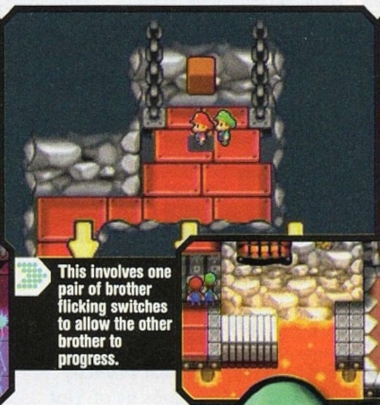
Around each area, dungeon and in Peach's castle are 'X' marks. Find these to dig up beans, which you can trade in for the best items.

TEAM PLAYERS

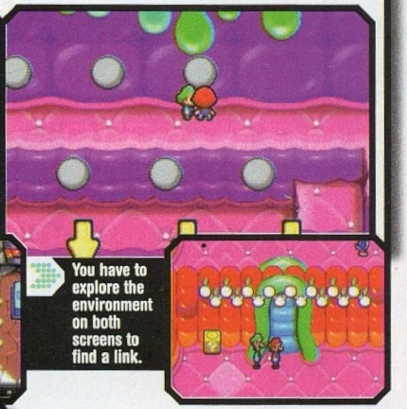
The vast majority of the game's puzzles revolve around the pairs of brothers split up over the DS's two screens. In order to take control of each pair, you simply press Ⓧ, Ⓨ or Ⓐ, Ⓑ to make the pair you want to control jump – at which point, the focus of the game's control switches from one screen to the other, depending on which button you've pressed. The complexity of the puzzles you need to get your head around soon get more and more inventive as you progress – to the point where they can often get pretty tricky...



Here you remotely control a moving platform that the older brothers are standing on.



This involves one pair of brother flicking switches to allow the other brother to progress.



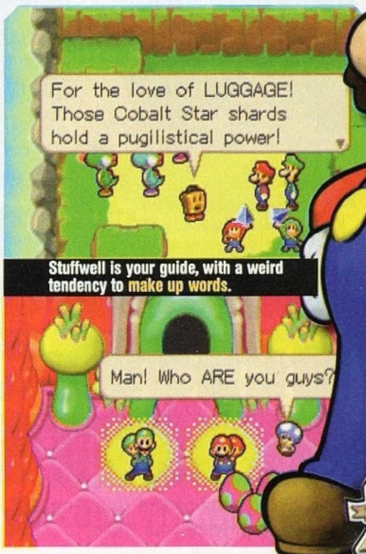
You have to explore the environment on both screens to find a link.

area you unlock like a mini-challenge in itself. They really get the grey matter working as you try to figure out how best to combine the brothers' unique skills with each other over both screens. It never feels like a slog and, more importantly, it keeps your interest high throughout each level, with out any 'low periods' that so often plague RPG's.

QUALITY CONTROL

This level of quality to extends to the turn-based battles too. Normally a rather tedious part of RPG's, the action commands add a high level interaction and, more importantly, are more a test of skill than patience. Better yet, the range of enemies – and the attack patterns they bring with them – make battles far more than just a case of sitting back while they, and the Bros, take it in turns to slap each other round the face.

Despite being a very solid RPG, it never takes itself too seriously. Granted, Mario and Luigi wouldn't be the obvious choice for a genre that prides itself on sweeping epics, but then that doesn't matter when you're faced with something so outrageously funny as this. There's just something very cheeky, almost silly about it all (and the game really focuses on this) as it throws one ridiculous situation at you after the next. Reason enough, we think, to start the new year with a smile on your face. GM



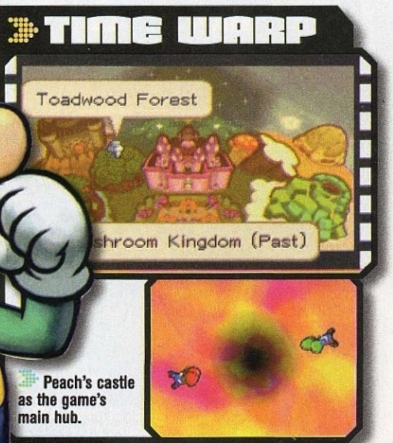
For the love of LUGGAGE! Those Cobalt Star shards hold a pugilistical power!

Stuffwell is your guide, with a weird tendency to make up words.

Man! Who ARE you guys?

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

TIME WARP



Toadwood Forest

shroom Kingdom (Past)

Peach's castle as the game's main hub.

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES	GM HATES
+ The amazing use of the dual screens	- It's a bit easy
+ The excellent dialogue	- A little short too
+ The clever little puzzles	- And a bit linear

GRAPHICS

Simple and clear – perfect for a Mario game and just what you'd expect.

GAMEPLAY

A truly hilarious story, and the best use of the Ds's double screens yet.

LIFESPAN

Short and sweet – it's not very long and it's pretty easy to complete, too.

OVERALL

90%

As good a *Mario* Adventure as you could hope for, and a cracking RPG in it's own right.

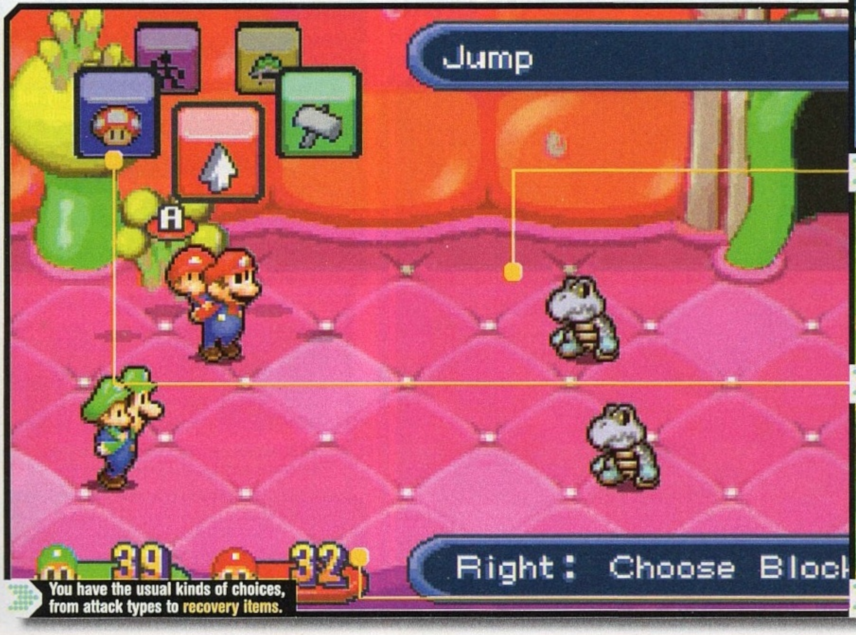
Other Formats

The closest alternative on your console:

XBOX	Conkers Bad Fur Day	90%
PS2	Gregory Horror Show	N/A
CUBE	Paper Mario: The Thousand Year Door	90%

FIGHTING TALK

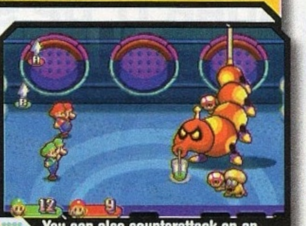
Unusually, the amount of damage you take from standard enemies is pretty high – so you can't just sit your turn out and hope for the best, it's far more involving than that.



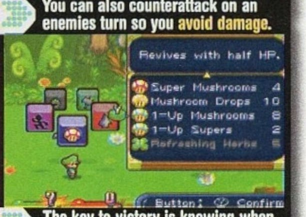
Jump

Right: Choose Block

You have the usual kinds of choices, from attack types to recovery items.



You can also counterattack on an enemies turn so you avoid damage.

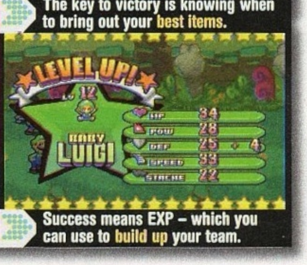


Revives with half HP.

Super Mushrooms	4
Mushroom Drops	10
1-Up Mushrooms	8
1-Up Supers	2
Refreshing Herbs	5

Button: Ⓐ Confirm

The key to victory is knowing when to bring out your best items.



Success means EXP – which you can use to build up your team.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: Lunar Genesis, 54%
WORSE THAN: Superstar Saga, 90%
WAIT FOR: Final Fantasy 3, TBC
BEST PRICE: £33, lik-sang.com

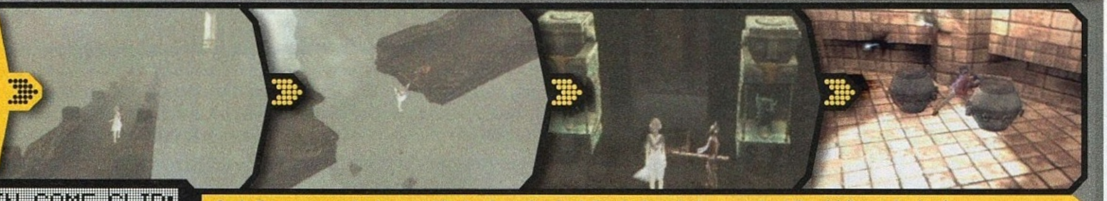
- **OUT:** NOW, RE-RELEASED IN FEBRUARY
- **FORMAT:** PS2
- **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** SCEJ
- **PUBLISHER:** SONY
- **ONLINE:** NO
- **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE
- **WEB:** WWW.ICOTHEGAME.COM
- **PLAYERS:** 1

WHAT IS IT?

Enchanting adventure, first released in 2002 and re-released by Sony to coincide with *Shadow of the Colossus.*

- Explore a mysterious and complex environment

HOW IT PLAYS!



IN-GAME CLIP: Scale the scenery, solve huge architectural puzzles, bash the shadowy bad guys and get the girl (to a safe place).

ICO

Boy meets girl meets prison-shrine

Ah, innocence. That's exactly what *ICO* reminds us of. Not just the young and plucky lead character ICO himself, a boy locked away in a deserted labyrinth for reasons that we won't divulge, but also of the first time we played it, back in 2002, when 'bling' was just a noise made by alarm clocks.

So, here we are again: Sony is to re-release *ICO* to coincide with its pseudo-sequel, *Shadow of the Colossus* (reviewed on page 54), in February. And any chance for us to go back and play *ICO* is as welcome as world peace to our mind.

I SHOULD ICO CO

First off, its looks haven't aged. By keeping to their own style, the visuals are timeless and will still look haunting 10 years from now, even without quintillions of polygons and triple-driple bump-mapping. A platforming game with the odd bout of action, it still feels like the adventure of a lifetime, with some dizzying and memorable set-pieces to work through. It's grand without being overblown, and tells a story well without having to ram a cutscene down your gullet every few minutes.

If you didn't buy it last time around, you'd better book some special me-time – close the curtains, drug the family pets, flush your mobile down the toilet and soak it up slowly and deeply like the classic that it is.

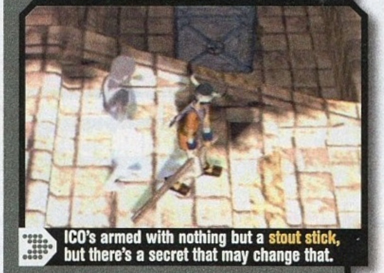
It's gentle and subtle enough to worm its way into your heart, but still violent enough to upset it.

It's a beautiful experience, provided, that is, you're the kind of player who doesn't depend on explosive head shots, split-second sword combos and squealing wheelspin to provide your thrills.

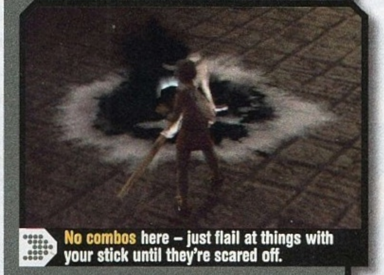
> "DRUG THE FAMILY PETS AND SOAK IT UP SLOWLY AND DEEPLY LIKE THE CLASSIC IT IS"

HIT PARADE

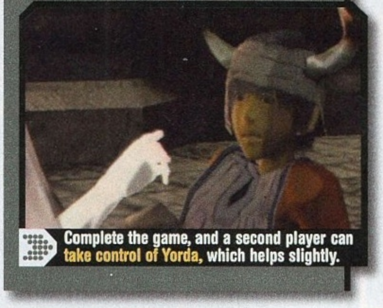
Often, a pool of jagged darkness will tear open in the ground, spilling handfuls of shadow creatures out into the real world. They're not after you, though, but Yorda, and are bloodily determined to steal her away.



ICO's armed with nothing but a stout stick, but there's a secret that may change that.



No combos here – just flail at things with your stick until they're scared off.

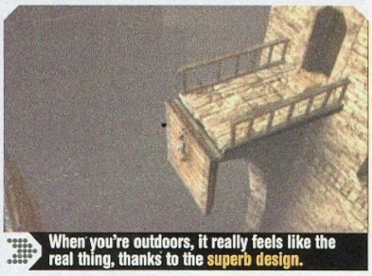


Complete the game, and a second player can take control of Yorda, which helps slightly.

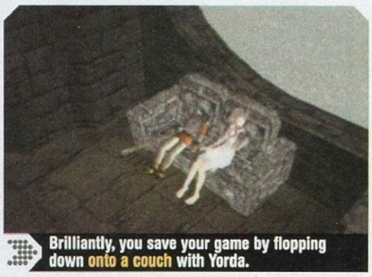
Other Formats

The closest alternative on your console:

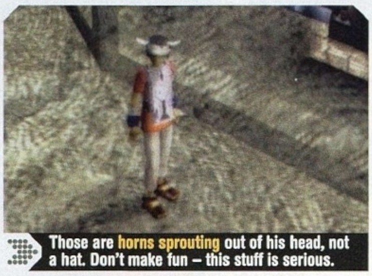
DS	Another Code	83%
CUBE	Prince of Persia: Sands of Time	86%
XBOX	Galleon	68%



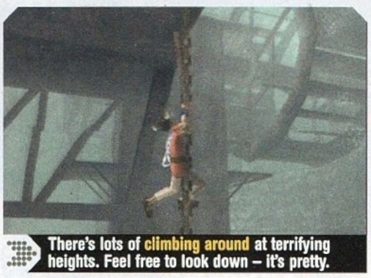
When you're outdoors, it really feels like the real thing, thanks to the superb design.



Brilliantly, you save your game by flopping down onto a couch with Yorda.



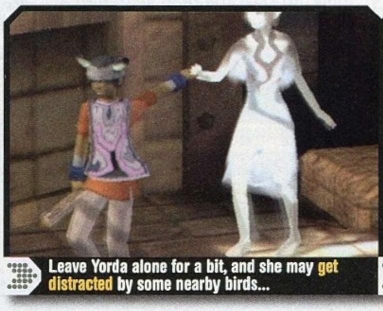
Those are horns sprouting out of his head, not a hat. Don't make fun – this stuff is serious.



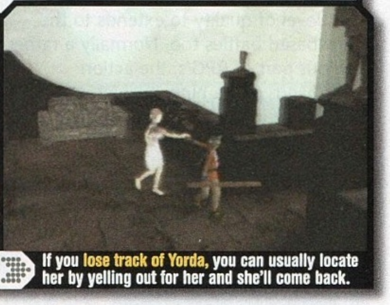
There's lots of climbing around at terrifying heights. Feel free to look down – it's pretty.

YORDA BEST THING

You'll hook up with ghostly gal Yorda. She's your only hope of escaping the sinister land you're stranded in. She can bypass the magical barriers dotted around the environment, so you'd best hold onto her, literally – you take Yorda from place to place by holding hands, which affects you more than you'd expect it to. It's up to ICO to take the lead, clearing a path for Yorda, and giving her help with some of the trickier obstacles.

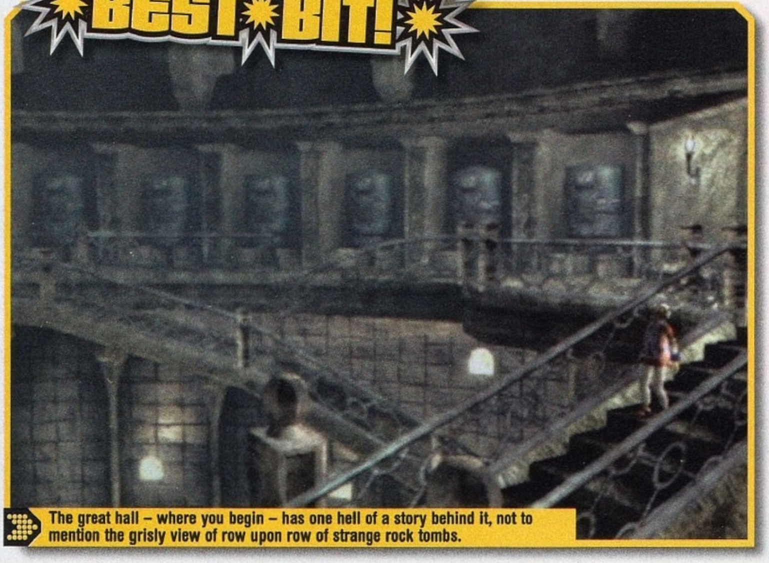


Leave Yorda alone for a bit, and she may get distracted by some nearby birds...



If you lose track of Yorda, you can usually locate her by yelling out for her and she'll come back.

BEST BIT!



The great hall – where you begin – has one hell of a story behind it, not to mention the grisly view of row upon row of strange rock tombs.

JUDGEMENT

STEVE

GM LOVES

- + More atmosphere than the planet Jupiter
- + Some spellbinding puzzles, and a touching story
- + Successfully taking care of delicate lass

GM HATES

- – Having to tussle with the camera system as well as shadowy, spectral enemies
- – Having Yorda stolen from us. It hurts like little else in gaming

GRAPHICS 85%
Appears basic in places, but is so stylish: shimmering, bleached and grand.

GAMEPLAY 89%
Camera and combat can feel iffy, but the sense of exploration is fantastic.

LIFESPAN 84%
Around eight hours to complete, but your memories of it will last much longer.

OVERALL

89%

An adventure classic. It's got some niggles, but few games are as captivating as this.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: King Kong, 70%
WORSE THAN: Shadow of the Colossus, 91%
WAIT FOR: Rule of Rose, Spring
BEST PRICE: TBC

OUT: NOW • **FORMAT:** DS • **PRICE:** £29.99
• **DEVELOPER:** VISUAL IMPACT • **PUBLISHER:** EA • **ONLINE:** NO • **SPECIAL:** WIRELESS MULTI-PLAYER
• **OTHER FORMATS:** PSP • **WEB:** WWW.EA.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-2 SINGLE CARD (1-5 MULTI-CARD)

BURNOUT LEGENDS

Has this legend finally burnt out and faded away?

Burnout Legends *is a prime example of why making a DS conversion of a game sometimes isn't a good idea. For this is* Burnout. *And it really isn't a good idea.*

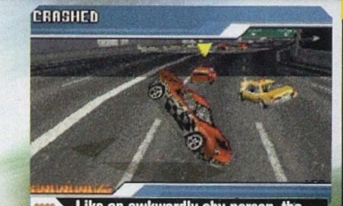
The handling is distinctly clunky for starters, with uncomfortable collision detection that denies you a good handful of near misses. You simply won't have the confidence to weave excitingly through traffic here. Not, of course, that there *is* much traffic, because for the most part developers Visual Impact have set this on a particularly sleepy Sunday afternoon. Some way into the evacuation of the planet. This makes a mockery of the trademark Crash Mode, as well as greatly decreasing the excitement of the proper racing.

ASBESTOS LINING

At the very least, the courses (a 'best of' selection from previous *Burnouts*) look decent in pseudo-N64-o-vision. And it does offer moments of sporadic excitement.

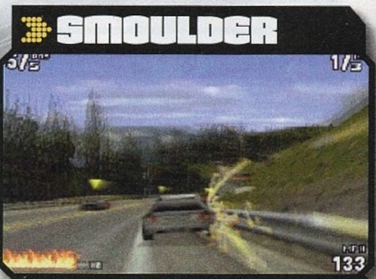
But then you'll start to notice the fade-in of background scenery, and the moments when computer cars ghost straight through the monuments in the middle of roundabouts, or drive forwards with the car facing diagonally, as if part of some faulty Scalextric set.

This isn't a finely tuned racing machine. It's running on diluted petrol, with a fogged up windscreen and hexagonal wheels. GM



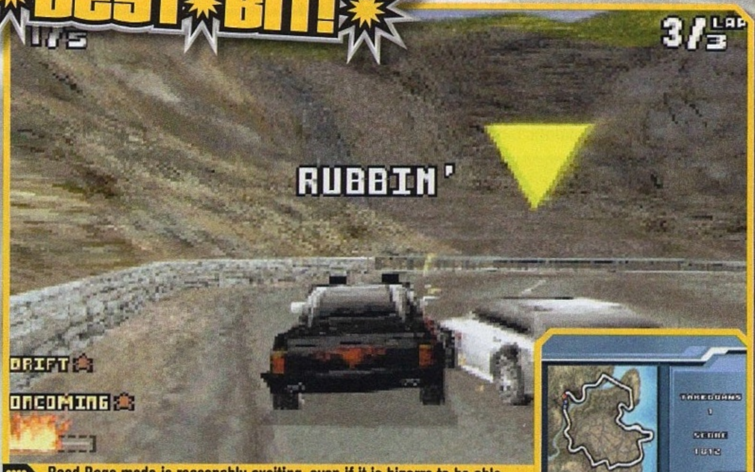
Like an awkwardly shy person, the bottom screen wants to be ignored.

SMOULDER



The actual Burnout boost is highly underwhelming on the DS. You're better off blurring your eyes and going for a jog.

BEST BIT!



Road Rage mode is reasonably exciting, even if it is bizarre to be able to flip a car over your head simply by bashing it from behind.

JUDGEMENT

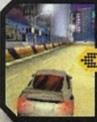
ADAM

GRAPHICS 76%
Despite some unsightly car models, the courses aren't too bad looking.

GAMEPLAY 38%
Enough of *Burnout* in it to be playable, but disappointingly weak on the whole.

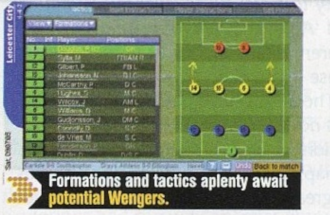
LIFESPAN 74%
Lots of different modes, actually, and a few hard cups and races to master.

OVERALL
43%
A poor man's version of a great man's arcade racer. More ash here than flame.



SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..................Nothing
WORSE THAN: .NFS: Underground 2 (DS), ...52%
WAIT FOR:... NFS: Most Wanted (DS), TBC
BEST PRICE:..............£29.99, amazon.co.uk

• **OUT:** NOW • **FORMAT:** PSP • **PRICE:** £34.99 • **DEVELOPER:** GUSTO GAMES • **PUBLISHER:** EIDOS
• **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** PS2, XB, PC • **WEB:** WWW.GUSTOGAMES.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1



Formations and tactics aplenty await potential Wengers.

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER

Miniature Mourinhos and bite-size Ballacks...

Whatever your thoughts on the whole *Footy Manager/ Championship Manager* fisticuffs, there's no denying *Champ Man* PSP is a true miniature marvel. All the leagues are there, all the players are there, and – frankly – it's incredible that something this mind-bogglingly comprehensive has all been squeezed right down into just a few inches of circuitry.

Unfortunately, while it's fairly simple to construct a solid defensive line, we seemed as toothless as Sunderland in front of goal.

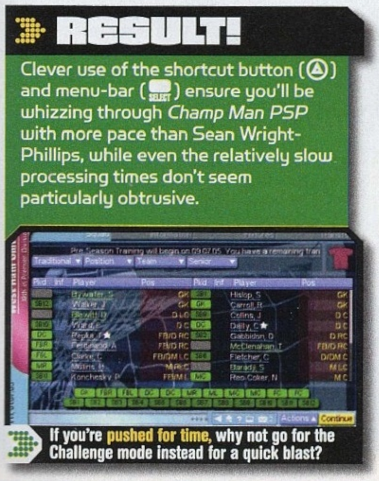
HAND TO GOAL MOUTH

No matter what team we faced, tactics or mentality we used – even gung ho – we tended to dominate possession while lacking a killer instinct. And games without goals equals a major lack of fun. There are also a few odd bugs. Having brokered a deal to sign Robin Van Persie in a swap deal for Morientes plus £6 mil, we were informed the transfer had collapsed owing to a lack of funds at Arsenal's end! Go figure…

Still, the potential is certainly there for something special. If the next instalment can learn to relax a bit, maybe we can all have some *real* fun. GM

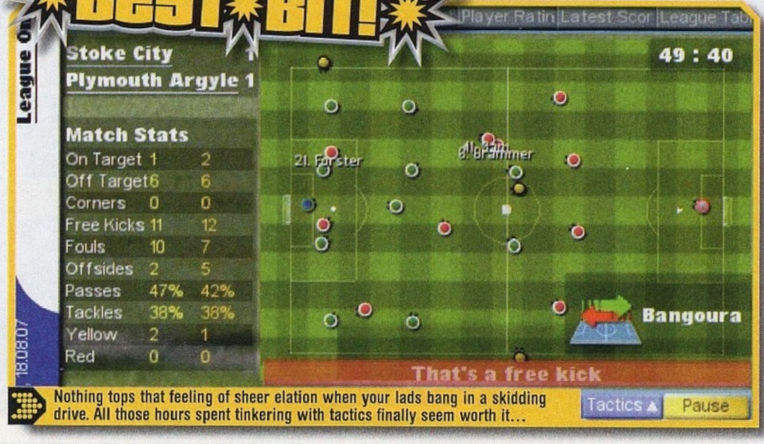
RESULT!

Clever use of the shortcut button (△) and menu-bar (SELECT) ensure you'll be whizzing through *Champ Man PSP* with more pace than Sean Wright-Phillips, while even the relatively slow processing times don't seem particularly obtrusive.



If you're pushed for time, why not go for the Challenge mode instead for a quick blast?

BEST BIT!



Stoke City 1
Plymouth Argyle 1

Match Stats

On Target	1	2
Off Target	6	6
Corners	0	0
Free Kicks	11	12
Fouls	10	7
Offsides	2	5
Passes	47%	42%
Tackles	38%	38%
Yellow	2	1
Red	0	0

Nothing tops that feeling of sheer elation when your lads bang in a skidding drive. All those hours spent tinkering with tactics finally seem worth it…

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GRAPHICS 80%
Bright, sharp and clear – a perfect reproduction of *Champ Man* on handheld.

GAMEPLAY 78%
The infrastructure is in place, but the engine needs tinkering with.

LIFESPAN 80%
Prepare to sacrifice untold hours. Downloadable updates keep things fresh.

OVERALL
74%
Nearly, *so nearly*, a masterpiece, but a few frustrating issues spoil the footie fun.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:...................Championship ....Manager 5, 61%
WORSE THAN: Football Manager 06, 91%
WAIT FOR:.....Football Manager PSP, March
BEST PRICE:...............£27.99, blahdvd.com

- **OUT:** 24TH FEBRUARY • **FORMAT:** PS2 • **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** ZIPPER INTERACTIVE • **PUBLISHER:** SONY • **ONLINE:** SEALS VS TERRORIST
- **SPECIAL:** HEADSET • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE • **WEB:** HTTP://WWW.SOCOMESEALS.COM/ • **PLAYERS:** 1 (1-32 ONLINE)

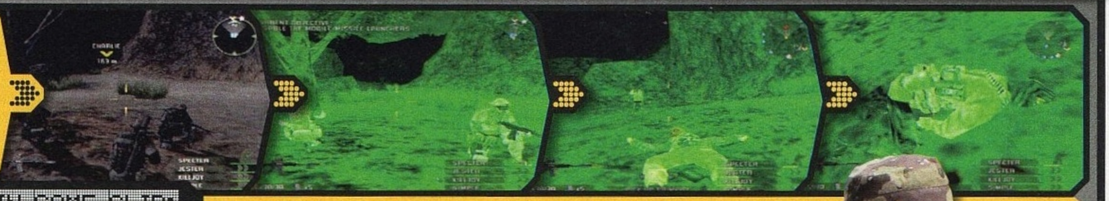
WHAT IS IT?

Twelve missions of gung-ho anti-terrorist manoeuvres with the US flag draped all over them.

- Twelve missions in South Asia, Morocco and Poland
- Over 30 weapons

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP:



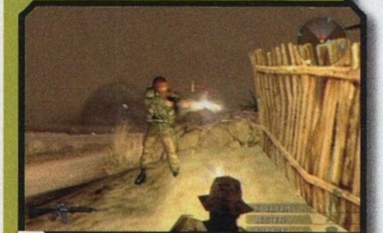
Power up the nightvision (with the compulsory 'kwheeee') and terrorize some terrorists. Yeah!

SOCOM 3: U.S. NAVY SEALS

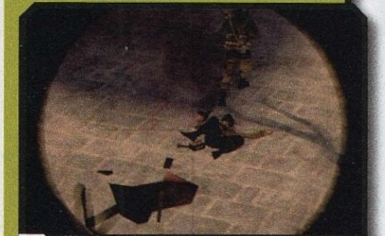
There's no 'AI' in team...

TERRORISTS!

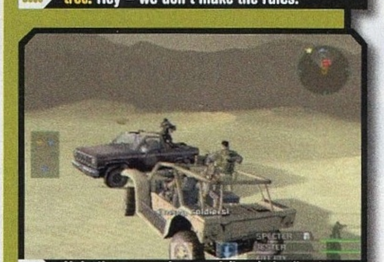
SOCOM 3's enemies went to the same school as your fellow SEALs. Things they know: how to sit motionless at the wheel of a truck and how to hide behind rocks until it's time for bed.



To be fair, a group of two or three freedom-threateners can kill you dead fast.



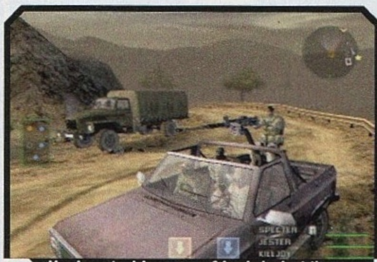
We shot this one in the back from behind a tree. Hey – we don't make the rules.



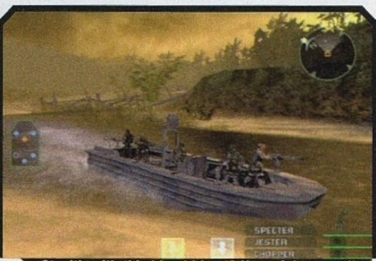
Help the enemy 'remove' (lose) the 'key' (blood) from 'the ignition' (a gaping wound).

GEARS OF WAR

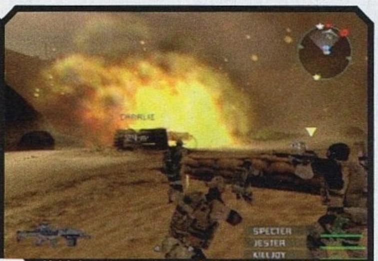
Vehicles are a first for *SOCOM*, and they shift the game up a gear nicely. You can carjack (or boatjack, or, er, humveejack) any vehicle you fancy, and it's always worthwhile: crossing a desert the size of Milton Keynes by foot just isn't fun.



You have to drive – your friends look at the steering wheel like it's a dead fish.



Stealth with this big old boat? You might as well phone the enemy ahead with your location.



Vehicles always have a full tank of petrol. Which might explain why they do this a lot.

So you want to be a real SEAL?" *SOCOM 3* must be joking. If real crack Navy operatives are as dangerously low on braincells as this game's AI soldiers – who have all the intelligence of the kind of seal you'll find honking for fish at Seaworld – you can count us out.

We've failed mission after mission in *SOCOM 3* because 'friendlies' run around like they've had a bath in Red Bull when they're supposed to be lying low. Or we'd lose an easy five-against-one battle of the bullets, or do the hokey-cokey with a terrorist if he gets too close. It's especially frustrating because *SOCOM* has *always* been the drooling simpleton of the combat crowd. These SEALs should really have grown brains by now.

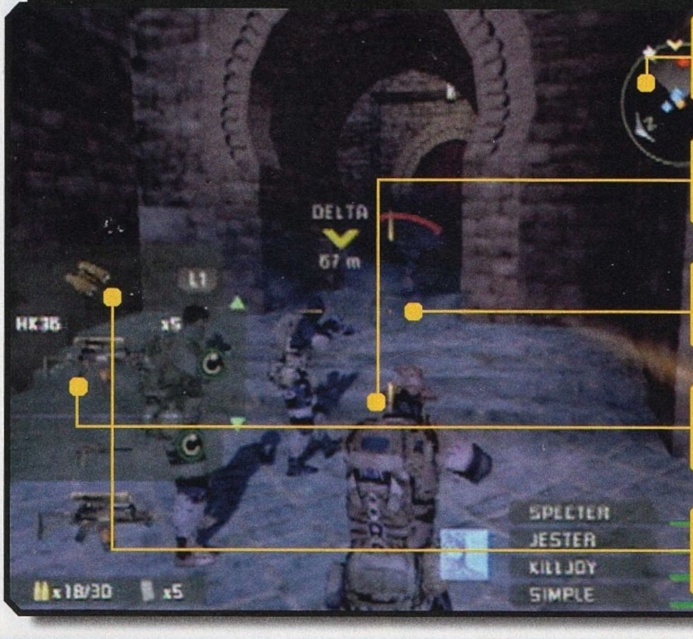
SEAL THE DEAL

A shame, because otherwise *SOCOM 3's* anti-terror trip isn't half bad. The plot's awful – big-headed bearded dictator is very bad boy, US spends billions on roughing him up. But the action sits roughly halfway between *Call of Duty* and *Ghost Recon*, with operations as tactical as you make them. We favoured running and gunning, blowing our cover and getting close enough to feed bullets to terrorists with a spoon. But with the ability to creep, snipe, silently kill and send 'Able' and 'Bravo' team off in different directions, you can make like the mouse if you like.

The SEALs have passed their driving tests now, too, and a big chunk of most missions is spent crossing wide expanses of map on wheels or water. The vehicles are great fun, but *SOCOM 3* focuses too much on giant-sized deserts as a result –

SEALED AND DELIVERED

How many Navy SEALs does it take to change a lightbulb? Not sure, but to change a despotic African regime, it's four. Specter, Jester, Killjoy and Simple might sound like the new *Tweenies*, but they can use 37 different guns – and swim sideways.



RADAR

You, your team, and where you're meant to be. The enemy is coloured Dulux Shade 174: Terrorist Red.

TEAM 16

Different commands are accessible by menu or headset voice. We tried "Sit" and "Roll over": no response.

AIM ASSIST

Wimps like us can turn on targeting boxes for easy, fear-free kills. The real-life SEALs would be so proud.

GUNS

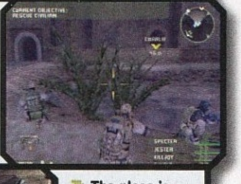
Heaven knows how you're hiding all this on you: but it's all so accurate, and bullets aren't in short supply.

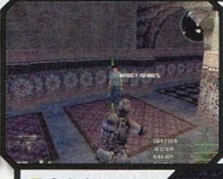
ACTIONS

Icons match quick-access commands, letting you plant C4 or load your little family into a jeep.

JOB DONE

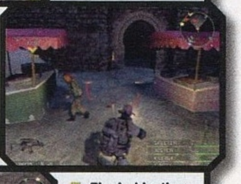
Five missions in, *SOCOM 3's* first close-quarters level arrives to give you the electric-nerves. Objective: rescue a US civilian.

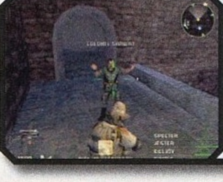




The place is swarming with terrorists, so order your boys to Fire At Will. Seventeen corpses later, there's Marcy.

Ordering your 'escortee' to "Get down!" is crucial as the battle rages, or she'll be left with her pretty skull flapping on its hinges.

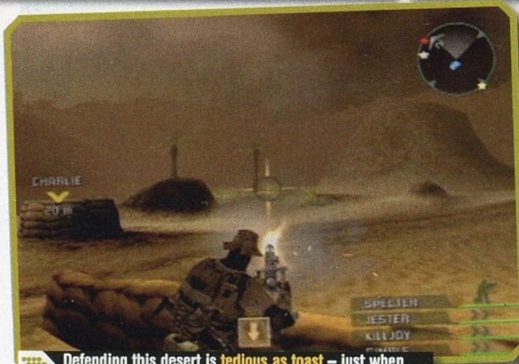




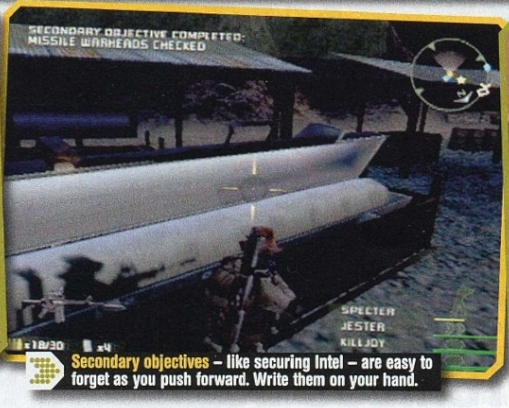
Final objective: force evil Colonel Sarwat to surrender. A flashbang does the job – or just put holes in his expensive shoes.

MISSION CREEP

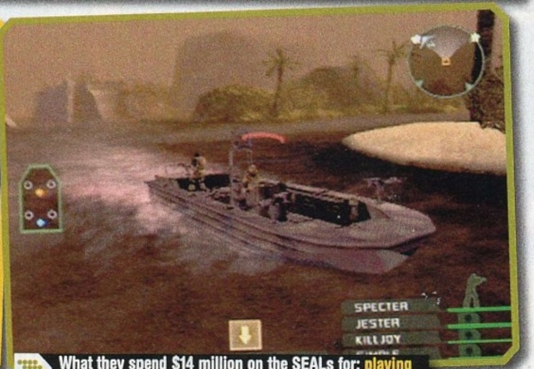
It's a big enough job trying to avoid shooting your teammates in the head (accidentally or otherwise) – but *SOCOM 3: U.S Navy SEALs* soon has you chasing despots, joyriding in boats, and punching radios. It's all in a day's work.



Defending this desert is **tedious as toast** – just when you think it's clear, another lot arrive.



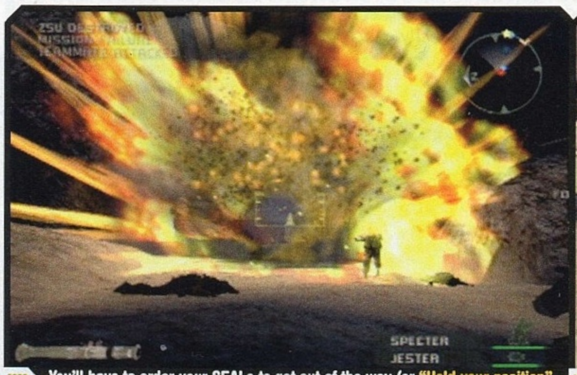
Secondary objectives – like securing Intel – are easy to forget as you push forward. Write them on your hand.



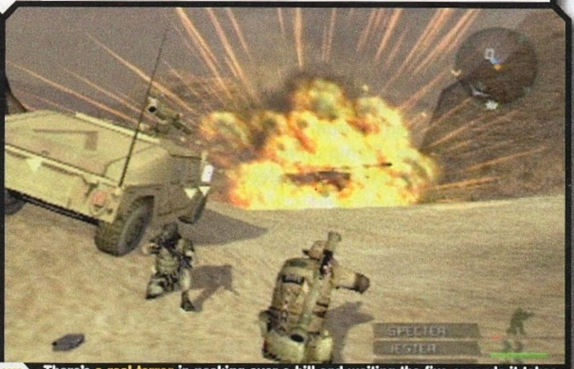
What they spend $14 million on the SEALs for: **playing dodgems with watercraft** at the drop of a hat.

GOING UP

The team usually leaves mission areas decimated – blowing up vehicles and missiles is a common objective. Your man Specter is usually lugging the AT-4 rocket launcher around with him, but you'll also need to 'designate' armoured targets for airstrikes.



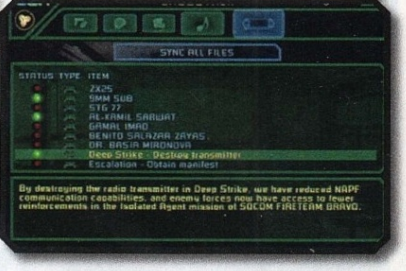
You'll have to order your SEALs to get out of the way (or **"Hold your position"**, as it's officially called) after you set a charge. Or they'll get barbecued.



There's **a real terror** in peeking over a hill and waiting the five seconds it takes to 'designate' an enemy for air support. This war stuff is scary!

PSP LINK

Polish off certain *SOCOM 3* missions and you'll unlock weapons and characters in PSP's *SOCOM Fireteam Bravo.* Echoes of that GC-GBA link-up nonsense that Nintendo eventually gave up on.



SYNC ALL FILES

```
STATUS TYPE ITEM
            2X25
            9MM SUB
            STG 77
            AL-KAMIL SARWAT
            GAMAL IMAD
            BENITO SALAZAR ZAYAS
            DR. BASIA MIRONOVA
            Deep Strike - Destroy transmitter
            Escalation - Obtain manifest
```

By destroying the radio transmitter in Deep Strike, we have reduced NAPF communication capabilities, and enemy forces now have access to fewer reinforcements in the Isolated Agent mission of SOCOM FIRETEAM BRAVO.

there are too many occasions when the game peppers a vast expanse with a sprinkling of terrorist terrors, leaving you feeling like you're swatting flies in the Millennium Stadium. Flies with guns.

CLOSING IN

It's in close quarters that *SOCOM 3* shines, where there's a decent balance of tense corner-peeking and all-out trigger-work. Yes, it looks like it's crawled out of polygon hell circa 1997 – only the explosions and the way enemies limp on their wounded legs drag this mess out the PSone zone – but it plays fine. You might even forgive it for the clumsy way it forces you to do what it wants with invisible walls that stop your vehicles (or your feet) in their tracks.

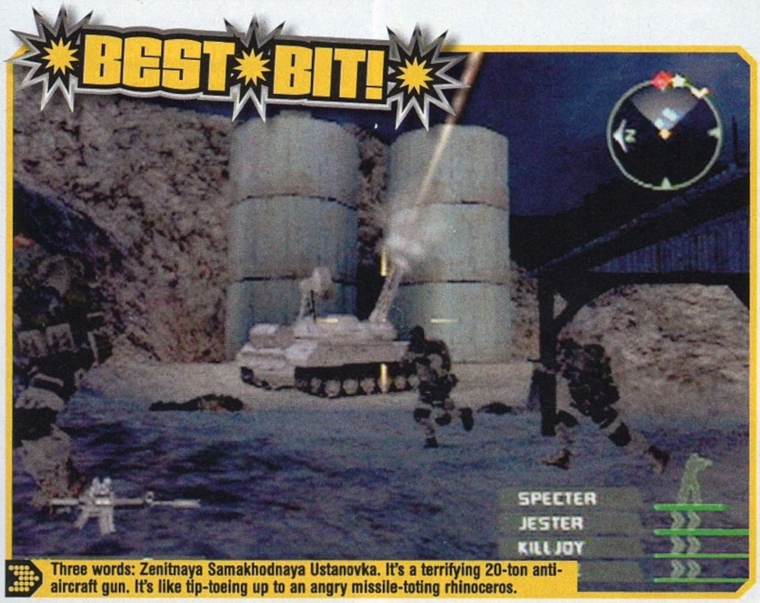
With just 14 missions, though, it's over quickly. *SOCOM 3* is best online. The vehicles add an extra dimension to battles, and the sheer number of guns (there are nearly 1000 weapon combinations) makes murdering a blabbering online idiot from halfway across the planet a real pleasure. With 32 players filling the vast maps with flying bullets, *SOCOM 3* will make your network adapter think it's its birthday all over again.

LINE 'EM UP

Best of all, online opponents don't re-enact scenes from *Naked Gun* by exchanging gunfire with a terrorist standing at arm's length. That, presumably, is what *real* SEALs do.

> "WE'D LOSE AN EASY FIVE-AGAINST-ONE BATTLE OR DO THE HOKEY-COKEY WITH A TERRORIST"

BEST BIT!



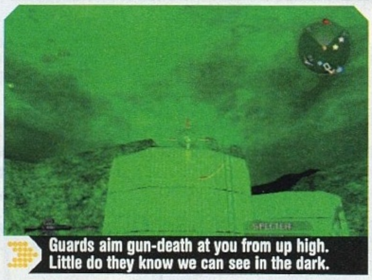
Three words: Zenitnaya Samakhodnaya Ustanovka. It's a terrifying 20-ton anti-aircraft gun. It's like tip-toeing up to an angry missile-toting rhinoceros.

Other Formats

The closest alternatives on your console:

XBOX Ghost Recon Advance Warfighter (see our preview on page 20).

PC Call of Duty 2	92%
CUBE Batallion Wars	90%



Guards aim gun-death at you from up high. Little do they know we can see in the dark.

The reason for all the killing: turning terrorist missiles into molten scrap. U! S! A! U! S! A!

JUDGEMENT

MARK

GM LOVES	GM HATES
+ Vehicles drive us wild + All-action battles + Gold-quality online war	- Enemy intelligence isn't - Visuals from the past - Dodge it if you're not online

GRAPHICS 64%

PS2 games from five years ago would smirk and nudge each other at seeing this.

GAMEPLAY 86%

Decent gun-vs-gun warplay, but it'd feel less lonely if the AI was up to the job.

LIFESPAN 84%

Owner of a network adapter? This will suck up your life like a new puppy.

OVERALL

83%

An improvement on *SOCOM 2* – especially the vehicles – but are SEALs really this stupid?

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: .... Killzone, 79%

WORSE THAN: Splinter Cell Chaos Theory, ... 93%

WAIT FOR: .... SOCOM 4, TBC

BEST PRICE: .... £29.99, amazon.co.uk

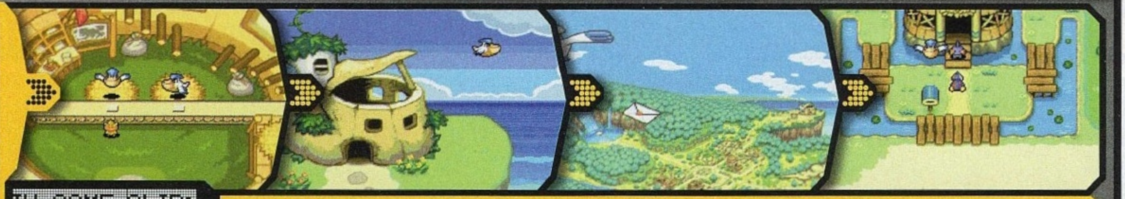
OUT: NOW (JP), TBC (UK) • **FORMAT:** DS • **PRICE:** £29.99 • **DEVELOPER:** CHUNSOFT • **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO
ONLINE: NO • **SPECIAL:** GBA LINK-UP • **OTHER FORMATS:** GBA • **WEB:** WWW.NINTENDO.CO.UK • **PLAYERS:** 1

GAME BOY ADVANCE
DS

WHAT IS IT?

One version of a *Pokémon* dungeon-crawling extravaganza. (The other version, *Red*, is for the GBA, and is practically identical.)

- All 386 Pokémon appear!



IN-GAME CLIP: Liberate fellow animals from randomly generated dungeons that are never the same twice.

POKÉMON

MYSTERIOUS DUNGEON: BLUE RESCUE FORCE

Turn to the boys in blue to rescue you…

Pop quiz, ladies and gentlemen: you've woken up in a forest, having been inexplicably transformed into a Pokémon. What do you do next? Hmm? Obviously, you open a rescue agency and save other Pokémon from randomly generated dungeons. Stamp on my toes and call me Eustace if it isn't the decent thing to do.

We suspect we're missing out on several degrees of comprehension, because at the moment *Pokémon: Fushigi no Dungeon* (to give it it's Jap title) is import-only. And it's an altogether different kettle of Magikarp, merging various *Pokémon* themes with those of Chunsoft's *Mysterious Dungeon* series.

Forget trainers and sinister costumed organisations: this game puts you directly in charge of a Pokémon itself. With your HQ in place, you're free to buy items, save cash at the bank and accept and decline missions at the postbox to your pleasing. Every mission takes you into a differently designed dungeon – nothing more than a series of rooms and corridors, over multiple floors – with the basic aim of rescuing a Pokémon or, occasionally, fighting a boss.

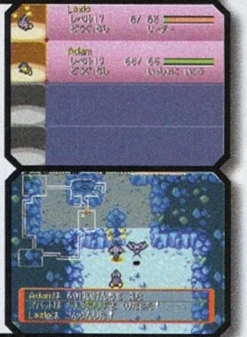
DUNGEON FUN

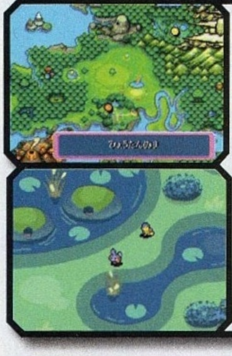
As a design, it's undeniably compulsive. The semi-turn-based gameplay is strategic and immediate at the same time, and there's always a great wealth of widgets to peruse. But that's problem: it's not at all import friendly, with dozens of varied items, stats, moves and missions, not to mention the ever-present commentary in the box at the bottom of the screen. It's easy to enjoy yourself once you've worked out the basics, but you'll be skating over a great layer of depth,.

We're crossing our fingers for a western release: *Dungeon* is great fun, even in Japanese, and let's hope Nintendo knows it.

RESCUE RANGERS

When you're wandering around the dungeons, the game uses a system that's partly real-time and partly turn-based: enemies stop dead in their tracks when you stop moving, and blows are exchanged in the usual back-and-forth manner.





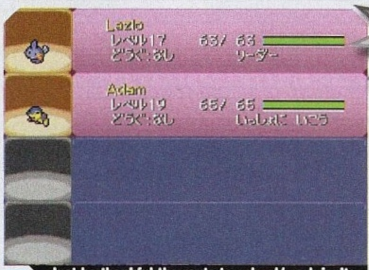
Naturally, the dungeon designs here won't dazzle you, but there is a pleasant amount of variety in the way they're spontaneously created. Some are filled with large open rooms, others long winding corridors… you get the idea.

Other Formats

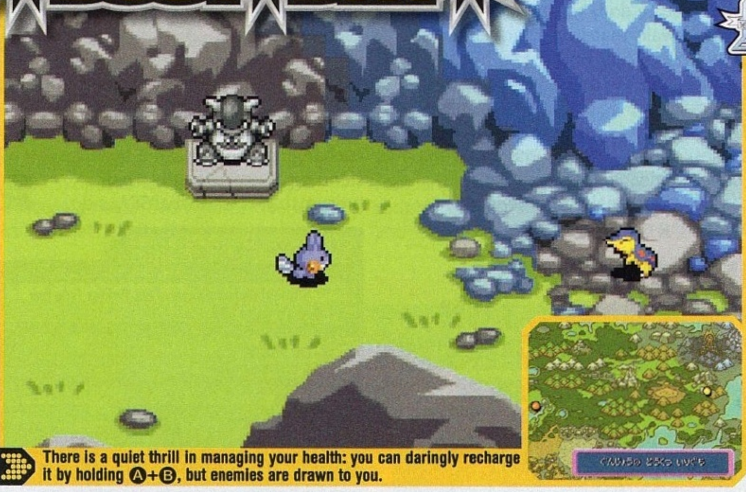
The closest alternative on your console:

GBA	Pokémon Ruby & Sapphire	85%
CUBE	Pokémon Colosseum	90%
PSP	Yu-Gi-Oh! Dawn of Destiny	41%

BEST BIT!



Just be thankful the route to school/work isn't randomly generated each morning.



There is a quiet thrill in managing your health: you can daringly recharge it by holding Ⓐ+Ⓑ, but enemies are drawn to you.

JUDGEMENT

ADAM

GM LOVES

- + The pleasing 'tap' noise the Pelipper makes when it delivers post
- + The unique, and very compelling, gameplay system

GM HATES

- - The cruelty of losing all your money and items when you fail (but it's necessary for the tension)
- - Not being able to read Japanese

GRAPHICS 63%
Drab dungeons, but then, they *have* to be. Sprites are nice, though.

GAMEPLAY 85%
A bit daunting at first, but fantastically compelling when you get into it.

LIFESPAN 90%
Giant, particularly if you want to get every Pokémon to join you.

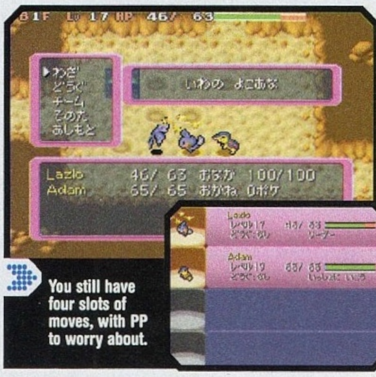
OVERALL

81%

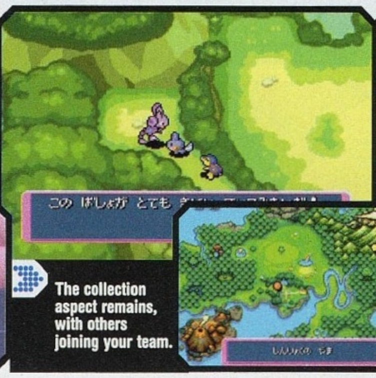
Marvellously moreish stuff, but inaccessible to say the least if you don't know Japanese.

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONITES

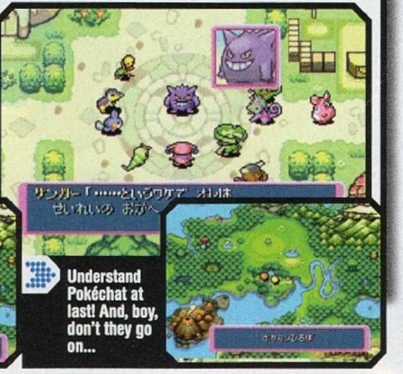
Sure, it's a departure from the usual Pokéball-slinging adventuring, but it's still *Pokémon* at heart. Despite the fact that you can't understand what they're all saying. And that they live in buildings of their own. And have an advanced economy in place.



You still have four slots of moves, with PP to worry about.



The collection aspect remains, with others joining your team.



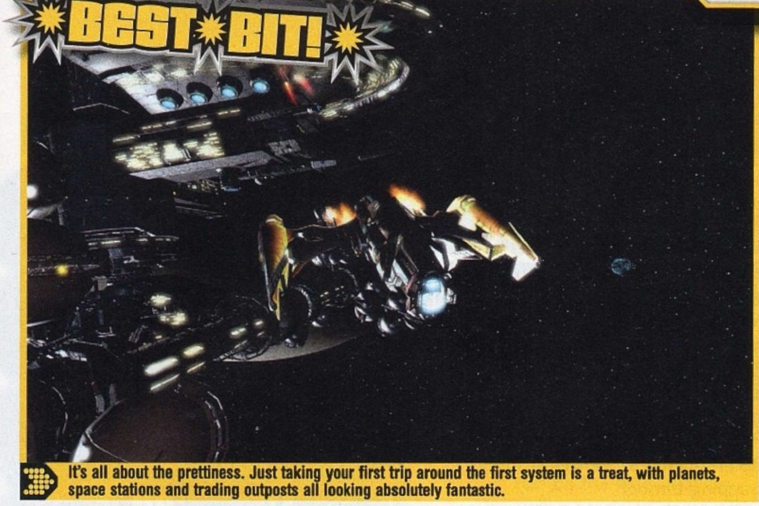
Understand Pokéchat at last! And, boy, don't they go on…

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: Digimon 4, 58%
WORSE THAN: Pokémon Emerald, 86%
WAIT FOR: The UK release
BEST PRICE: £28.66, lik-sang.com

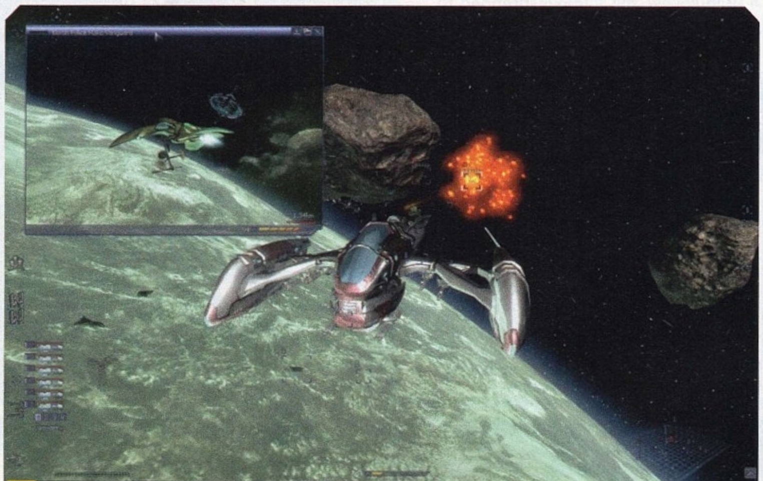
• OUT: NOW **• FORMAT:** PC **• PRICE:** £34.99
• DEVELOPER: EGOSOFT **• PUBLISHER:** DEEP SILVER **• ONLINE:** NO
• OTHER FORMATS: NONE **• WEB:** WWW.EGOSOFT.COM **• PLAYERS:** 1

PC

BEST BIT!



It's all about the prettiness. Just taking your first trip around the first system is a treat, with planets, space stations and trading outposts all looking absolutely fantastic.



Raise enough cash and you can start buying and running your own fleets. Global domination beckon.

X3: REUNION

More Star Chores than *Star Wars*...

Nobody will admit to having made anyone try it, but going out in space without a suit on is really, really bad for you. You'll get a couple of seconds to admire the view and probably gibber a bit before spontaneously depressurising and spraying your internal organs all over the place. Interestingly, you can have exactly the same experience sitting down to play *X3* for the first time.

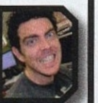
TOTAL RECOIL

Sure, it's hugely pretty, but it makes no attempt to explain itself – you're just stuffed in a ship and thrown into an uncaring universe, causing the aforementioned explosion when you try and work out what to do. Once you have, things pick up: you've got total freedom to do what you like – be it piracy, trading, or following the main storyline.

Trouble is, only the trading is very advanced – the plot is rubbish, the combat is dull, and it runs like a one-legged elephant. If intergalactic invoicing is your idea of fun, it's great: if you're looking for adventure, get something with more guns in.

GM

JUDGEMENT ROB



GRAPHICS 90%
Jaw-droppingly awesome. Shame your PC will explode trying to run them.

GAMEPLAY 55%
The trade model is amazing, but it's not matched by the ponderous combat.

LIFESPAN 80%
Get past the first few hours and you'll be playing until your pension arrives.

OVERALL
60%
Hugely deep, just not that much fun. For space statisticians only.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.....Star Track Elite Force 2, 80%
WORSE THAN: ....EVE Online, N/A
WAIT FOR:....................Another few patches
BEST PRICE:.......................£17.99, Play.com

• OUT: NOW **• FORMAT:** XB 360 **• PRICE:** £49.99 **• DEVELOPER:** TIBURON
• PUBLISHER: EA **• ONLINE:** MULTI-PLAYER **• OTHER FORMATS:** GC, XB, PS2, PSP **• WEB:** WWW.EASPORTS.COM **• PLAYERS:** 1-4

MADDEN NFL 06

EA's gridiron flatters to deceive...

If you're looking to wow your friends with the awesome graphical power of Microsoft's new console then just slip on a copy of *Madden NFL 06*. This is the shiniest, most glittering sports game we've clapped our eyes on. Hours can be lost just gazing at the action replays whirring backwards and forwards, marvelling at the sumptuous animation and detail. After you played this on a HDTV suddenly the real world looks fuzzy and blurred in comparison.

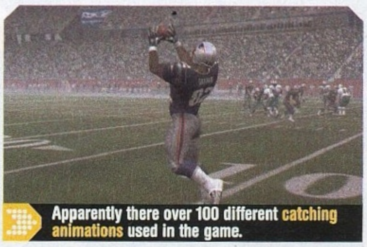
MADDEN AMERICA

But if you look past the box fresh visuals, this is still just *Madden 06*, but even less so as several features have been stripped from the versions available on the PS2 and Xbox. This includes the inability to challenge plays, the absence of mini-camp games and the Owner mode.

While these ommissions will only trouble hardcore *Madden* fans (as the core of a very good sports game is still there) it's further evidence of EA stripping their sports title of key features in order to hurry them onto the 360. It's affected *Tiger Woods* and *NBA*, and really shouldn't be encouraged in any way, especially when 360 games are fifty quid a pop.

So while *Madden NFL 06* is a superb technical demo, there's better games of American Football and *Madden* already available out there.

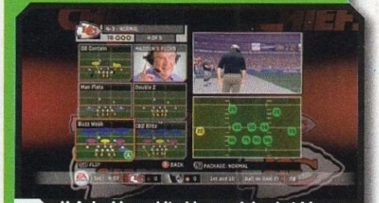
GM



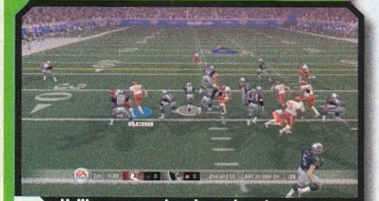
Apparently there over 100 different catching animations used in the game.

LESSON UP!

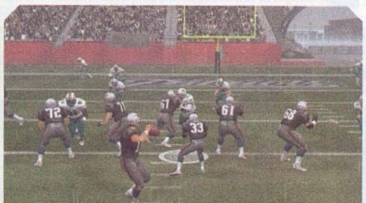
The games presentation is superb and caters for the American Football novice superbly with menu help from John Madden himself.



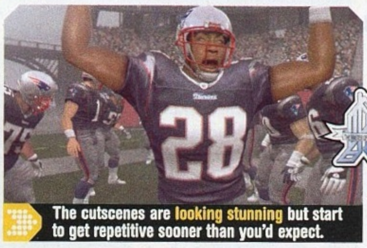
He's looking a bit old now, John, but his football mind is still as sharp a tac.



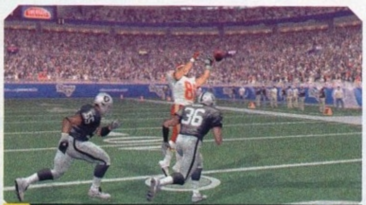
He'll recommend various plays to you, pointing out their various strengths.



The Quarterbacks now have vision cones, the bigger it is, the more accurate the throw.

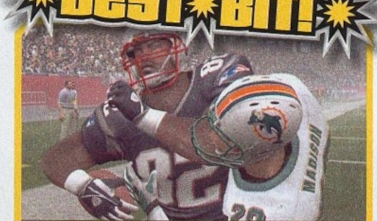


The cutscenes are looking stunning but start to get repetitive sooner than you'd expect.



The stadium effects are superb, but the audio lacks oomph. It's all a bit MW radio.

BEST BIT!



Zooming in right in a watching the expressions on the faces as the hits fly in.

JUDGEMENT DAVE

GRAPHICS 94%
Truly next gen. The kind detail and quality that we be should be expecting.

GAMEPLAY 81%
An excellent sport sim, but not the giant leap forward for the *Madden* series.

LIFESPAN 85%
There's the franchise mode to plough through and it's also playable online.

OVERALL
77%
Visually stunning, but not as complete a game as it was on the Xbox or PS2.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..................NFL Street, 68%
WORSE THAN: ...NFL Madden 06 on Xbox 89%
WAIT FOR:....................NFL Madden 07, TBC
BEST PRICE:......................£39.99, play.com

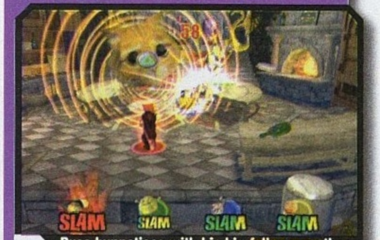
• OUT: NOW **• FORMAT:** PS2 **• PRICE:** £34.99 **• DEVELOPER:** SHABA GAMES
• PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION **• ONLINE:** NO **• OTHER FORMATS:** GC, XB **• WEB:** WWW.ACTIVISION.COM **• PLAYERS:** 1-4

SHREK SUPERSLAM

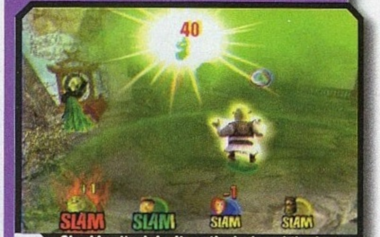
Lots of Shrek, plenty of slam, surprisingly super...

SLAY 'EM!

Each character has their own unique set of moves, including a show stopping Special Attack. Our particular favourite is Puss in Boot's mesmeric giant head, but Shrek's flattening flatulence runs in at a very close second. There's also items such as giant hams which are great to use in the middle of a scrap to give your character the edge.



Puss hypnotises with his big feline eyes then he's in to scratch their eyes out.



Shrek's attack isn't particularly subtle; just a huge guff that will damage anyone's health.

We foolishly believed that the best beat-'em-ups feature kung experts, and pumped up wrestlers or, at a push, narcissistic self projections of gangsta rappers – but after playing the latest *Shrek*, we now realise it should be the sole preserve of fairytale characters.

And when you see the Gingerbread man pummel the face of a cyclops, or Pinnochio in all his pine glory fronting up to the Black Knight in *Shrek SuperSlam* that we hope you'll agree.

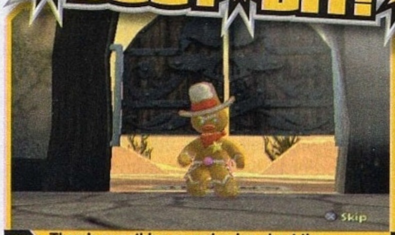
TALE OF FAIRIES

The actual game is just an average rip off of Sega classic, *Powerstone*, with up to four characters bouncing around an arena chucking parts of the scenery at each other. Why this is so particularly entertaining is because all the Shrek characters are brilliantly recreated – either in the genuinely funny cutscenes, or when they're beating each other to a pulp. This wouldn't be much of a game if it had the forgettable cast of *Shark's Tale*. But watching Red Riding Hood batter opponents mercilessly with apples or Shrek skip merrily onto the end of Prince Charming's sword, just seems to make sense. Laugh-out-loud sense.

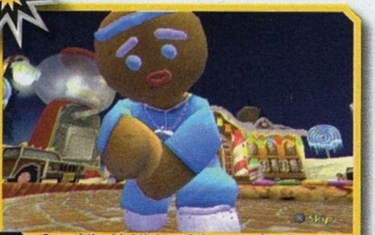
The Story mode is shamefully short but the 45 Mega Challenges where, among other tasks, you to have to throw a handful of screaming Gingerbread men into an open fire, are well worth scrapping through.

Obviously, the game is intended to appeal to younger gamers, but just like the film it's based on, *SuperSlam* should capture a few older gamer's attention as well. GM

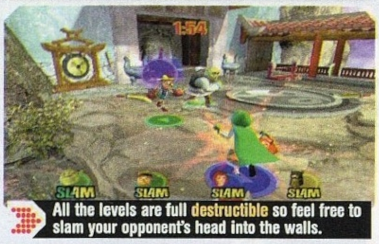
BEST BIT!



There's something so endearing about the Gingerbread man, especially when he acts tough.



One of the highlights of the game is when Gingy goes gangsta. Real sweet.



All the levels are full destructible so feel free to slam your opponent's head into the walls.

JUDGEMENT

DAVE

GRAPHICS 35%
All the character's appearances and animations are faithful to the film.

GAMEPLAY 70%
Sharp, snappy but not inspired. Too often descends into button bashing.

LIFESPAN 38%
VERY short Story mode but Mega Challenges and multi-player add value.

OVERALL

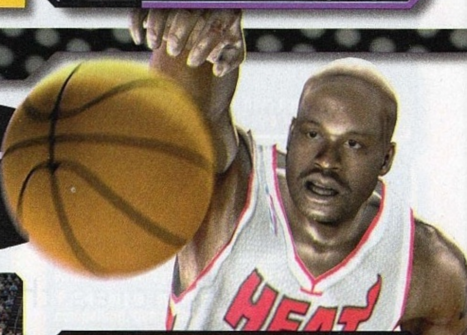
70%

Entertaining *Shrek* spin-off, full of the humour of the film and some half decent scrapping.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.... The Simpsons Wrestling, 43%
WORSE THAN: Smackdown Vs RAW 2, 82%
WAIT FOR:.................Rumbles Rose XX, TBC
BEST PRICE:..............£27.99, gameplay.com

• OUT: NOW **• FORMAT:** XB 360 **• PRICE:** £44.99 **• DEVELOPER:** VISUAL CONCEPTS **• PUBLISHER:** 2K6
• ONLINE: VERSUS **• OTHER FORMATS:** PS2, XB **• WEB:** WWW.2KSPORTS.COM **• PLAYERS:** 1-4

NBA 2K6



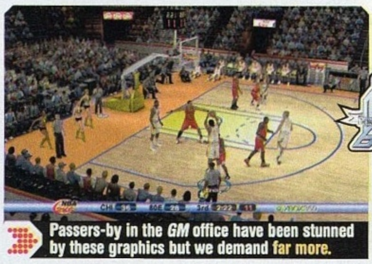
New console, but same old game...

While *NBA 2K6* is on a next-gen format, it is not a next-gen game by any means. This isn't a brave new take on basketball that takes sports simulation to a new level – it's just a port of the PS2 and Xbox game.

We must point out that the player models have been revamped – some look spookily real, some just spooky. This is mainly because the rest of the game hasn't been given any next-gen love, so these incredibly detailed players look a bit incongruous running alongside horrifically rendered cheerleaders.

The actual game is perfectly fine – a very competent basketball simulator which will be appreciated by gamers who really know their basketball. It has got an interesting 'shot stick' function, too, so you can shoot using the right analogue stick – allowing the players to protect the ball when making a shot.

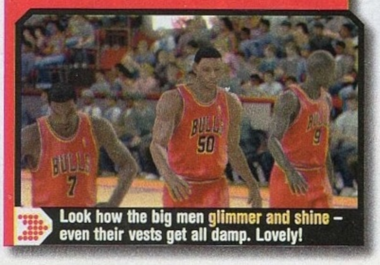
While many people might be blown away by the glistening sweat effects and the polish of the wooden boards, this is still just a polished up Xbox game, and we should be expecting and getting much more from the 360. GM



Passers-by in the *GM* office have been stunned by these graphics but we demand far more.

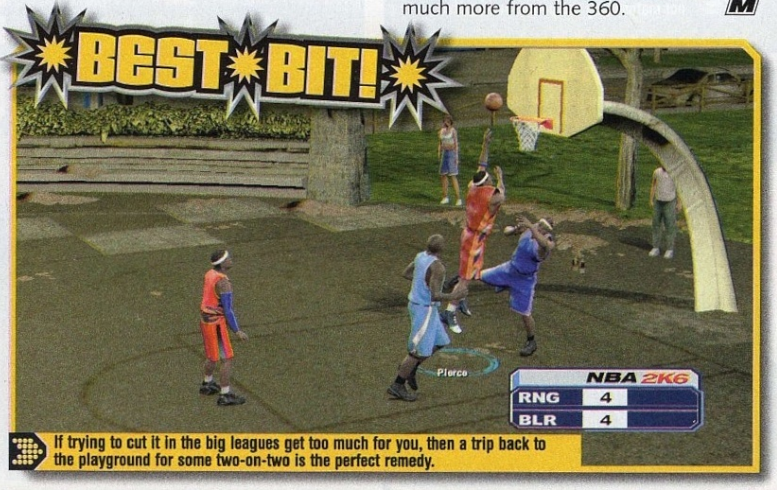
PIT MARKS

How can you tell this is a next-gen game? Well it's all about the sweat. Every player starts to glisten slightly as the match goes – occasionally it just make them look feverish.



Look how the big men glimmer and shine – even their vests get all damp. Lovely!

BEST BIT!



If trying to cut it in the big leagues get too much for you, then a trip back to the playground for some two-on-two is the perfect remedy.

JUDGEMENT

DAVE

GRAPHICS 88%
Great player animation, sitting oddly alongside ugly crowds and cheerleaders.

GAMEPLAY 70%
Very good. There's an interesting shots system and technical depth to the game.

LIFESPAN 35%
There's plenty of depth to the play, especially when you start getting tactical.

OVERALL

64%

A good Xbox basketball sim. We should be expecting much, much more from a 360 game.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:........Kidz Sports Basketball 43%
WORSE THAN: ....NBA 2K6, 64%
WAIT FOR:..................................NBA 2K7, TBC
BEST PRICE:............£39.99, gameplay.com

OUT: NOW (JAPAN), MARCH 2006 (UK) • **FORMAT:** DS • **PRICE:** £29.99
DEVELOPER: SEGA • **PUBLISHER:** SEGA • **ONLINE:** WIFI COMPATIBLE
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • **WEB:** WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-4

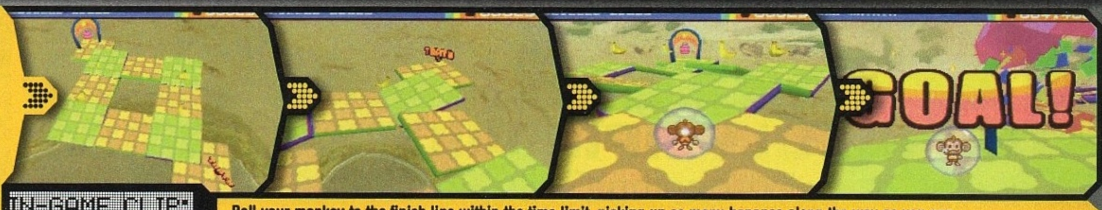
DS

WHAT IS IT?

Sega's classic monkey-in-a-ball game on the DS. It's been done on almost every other format – now it's the turn of the DS, complete with stylus control

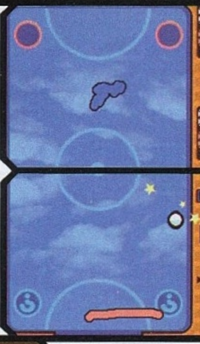
- More than 100 levels to roll through
- Six mini-games in total – old and new

HOW IT PLAYS!

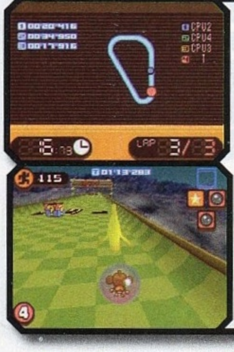


IN-GAME CLIP: Roll your monkey to the finish line within the time limit, picking up as many bananas along the way as you can.

MINI MONKEYS



Monkey Hockey is one of the best mini-games. Start each game drawing your own paddle then move your paddle with the stylus. Win by knocking the puck into your opponent's goal and you get a longer line to draw with next time.



Monkey Race is the same as ever but you have to use the stylus to control it. It works by having to place the stylus just ahead of your monkey to guide them along. Unfortunately, having to do that obscures your view of the track quite a bit.

SUPER MONKEY BALL TOUCH AND ROLL

The monkeys are set free...

While we liked *Super Monkey Ball* on the GBA, playing such a precision game with a D-pad instead of an analogue stick was like playing it with bananas for fingers.

The DS's touch-related method of control is a big improvement. Simply touch the monkey graphic on the bottom screen with the stylus to tilt the screen and send your monkey rolling towards the goal-posts. It works as a sort of roller-ball, but not a very good one unfortunately. It's very difficult to keep an eye on both where you're touching the bottom screen *and* the top screen where your monkey is teetering on the edge of a tiny ledge. Stroking the screen doesn't give you the precision control you need.

So it's still a case of using the D-pad then, which makes the game infinitely more frustrating than the GameCube version. The game itself remains in glorious 3D and aside from some more cartoony graphics, looks pretty similar to the original. To make it more handheld-friendly, the 100 or so levels are broken up into different worlds.

The six mini-games that are included are easily as much fun as Challenge mode. Playable over WiFi for up to four players are the likes of Monkey Bowling, Hockey and Wars. Again, games like Monkey Fight suffer from the clumsy controls but Monkey Hockey – where you draw your own paddle then use the stylus to knock the puck back and forth – is DS gold. Monkey Wars is a FMS (First-Monkey Shooter) controlled similarly to *Metroid* and is also a lot of fun.

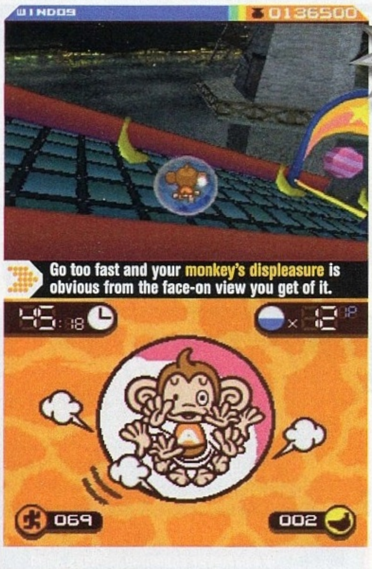
When it's good it's great, when it's bad it's frustrating enough to make throwing your DS in a river a definite possibility. There's no doubt that *Monkey Ball* fans will still love it though. GM

Other Formats

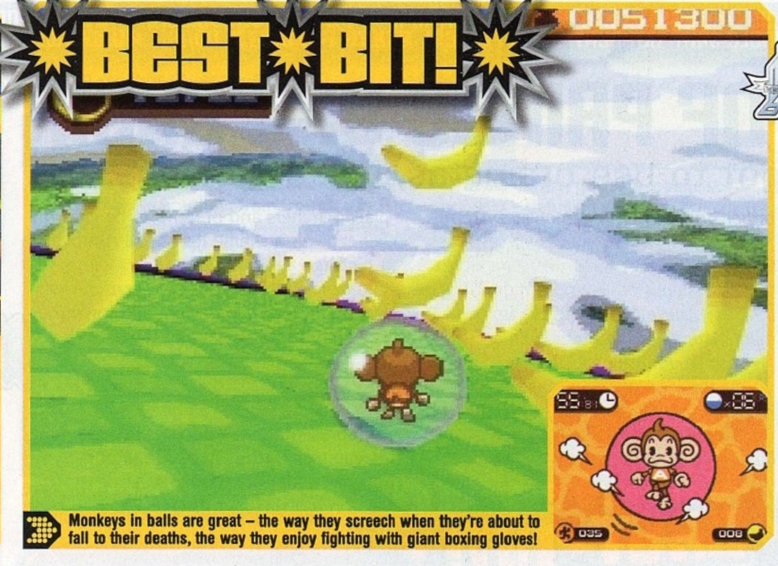
The closest alternative on your console:

GBA	Wario Ware	88%
CUBE	Wario Ware Mega Games	80%
PSP	Mawaru Made in Wario	90%

BEST BIT!



Go too fast and your monkey's displeasure is obvious from the face-on view you get of it.



Monkeys in balls are great – the way they screech when they're about to fall to their deaths, the way they enjoy fighting with giant boxing gloves!

JUDGEMENT

KATH

GM LOVES

- + Loads of brand new levels for DS
- + Monkey Hockey makes up for no Monkey Target
- + The DS perfectly suits some of the multi-player mini-games

GM HATES

- - The stylus control is clumsy

GRAPHICS 82%

Very little is lost graphically on the DS. Seeing your monkey's face is nice.

GAMEPLAY 80%

Not much has changed. There are some good new mini-games, though.

LIFESPAN 78%

Challenge mode is easier now with 10 bananas bagging you an extra life.

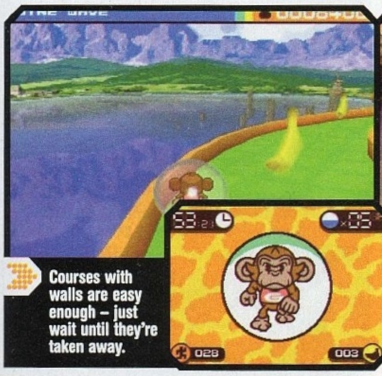
OVERALL

79%

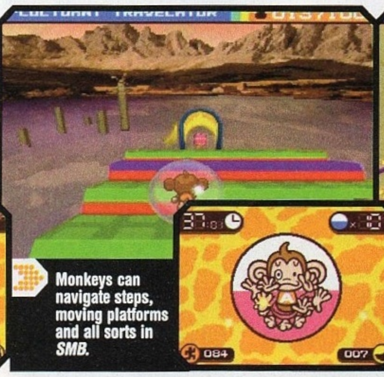
The monkeys are out of control in a bad way. But *SMB* continues doing what it does best.

FALL OUT

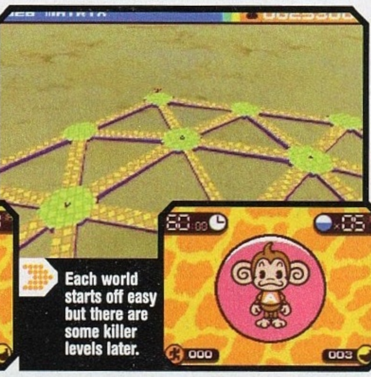
The levels are broken up into 10 themed worlds, each with 10 levels to get through. Finish a world and you get the credits, which are a game in themselves. You have to flick the monkeys from the bottom screen to the top and hit the letters in the developers' names.



Courses with walls are easy enough – just wait until they're taken away.



Monkeys can navigate steps, moving platforms and all sorts in *SMB*.



Each world starts off easy but there are some killer levels later.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

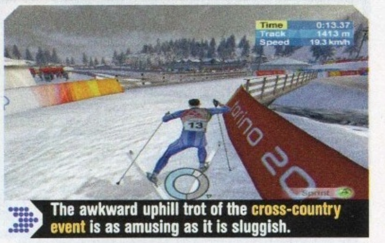
BETTER THAN: The Sims 2, 74%
WORSE THAN: Super Monkey Ball Deluxe, 91%
WAIT FOR: Trauma Centre: Under the Knife, March
BEST PRICE: £26.99, play.com

• **OUT:** 27TH JANUARY • **FORMAT:** XB • **PRICE:** £39.99 • **DEVELOPER:** 49GAMES
• **PUBLISHER:** 2K SPORTS • **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** PS2, PC • **WEB:** WWW.2KSPORTS.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-4

PS2
XBOX
PC

TORINO 2006 - THE XX OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

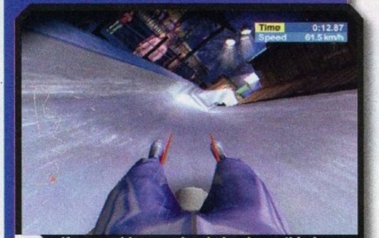
Cool runnings or hot droppings?



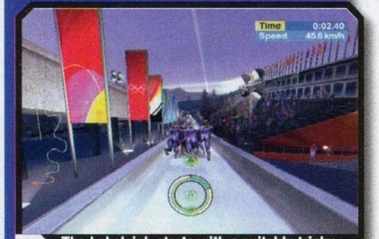
The awkward uphill trot of the **cross-country event** is as amusing as it is sluggish.

GO FLUME

The bobsleigh and luge events feature some stunning speed. Both are viewed from a dizzying bumper-cam. Warning prompts appear in the bottom corners of the screen to let you know when you're near the wall, so you can avoid turning your rider's elbows into jam.



If we could remember **being born**, this is what it would feel like.



The bobsleigh starts with a suitably tricky **rhythm action section** before you get going.

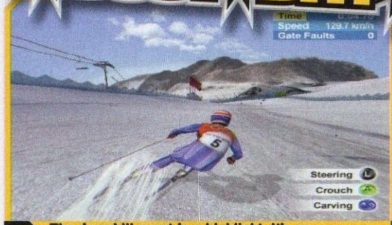
It's no surprise that games based on Olympic events – all healthy competition, sweating, noisy crowds and 'sporting' behaviour – lend themselves best to multi-player. With *Torino 2006*, you've got just eight traditional winter games to choose from (bobsleigh, slalom etc.), with slight variations within each.

It feels like slim pickings, but that doesn't matter to begin with, as *Torino's* a superbly easy game to get into, thanks to some good, simple play design that means that only the speed skating and ski jump events need any explanation. Every aspect of each sport is reduced to a handful of simple mini-game mechanics – rhythm action bits, balance bars and button bashing – so there's little issue in terms of control, but it does mean that each event soon begins to tire.

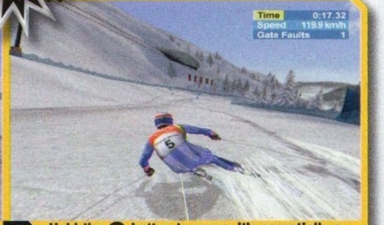
It's a game that's also strangely relaxing, in that cool, crisp manner that made *Amped 3* such a distraction; provided, that is, you're not rocketing down the inside of a frozen tube at the speed of unsound in the luge.

Torino is well-produced and satisfying but very short-lived, unfortunately. We'd only choose it over, say, the excellent bonus games of *Super Monkey Ball* if we were barmy for its official game-of-the-event status. Regardless, it still makes for a decent cold war between friends on a chilly winter's night, giving you a bright red face, indoors as well as out. GM

BEST BIT!



The downhill event is a highlight. It's as responsive as a decent racing game.



Hold the Ⓧ button to carve; it's essentially a handbrake for tight corners.

JUDGEMENT

STEVE

GRAPHICS 78%
Hardly brilliant, but feels smooth and has a decent draw distance.

GAMEPLAY 77%
Satisfyingly easy to get into, but feels somewhat shallow as a result.

LIFESPAN 72%
Good with friends, but heated multi-player contests sputter out quickly.

OVERALL
75%
A winter-warming mixture that's fun in multi-player, but has the lifespan of a snowball.

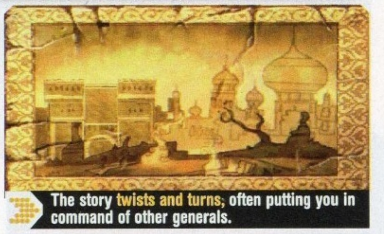
SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:........................Amped 2, 72%
WORSE THAN: Super Monkey Ball's bonus ....games on GC/Xbox/PS2
WAIT FOR:..........Umm, the 2008 Olympics?
BEST PRICE:........................ £29.99, play.com

• **OUT:** NOW • **FORMAT:** DS • **PRICE:** £29.99 • **DEVELOPER:** UBISOFT MONTREAL • **PUBLISHER:** UBISOFT • **ONLINE:** NO
• **SPECIAL:** WIRELESS MULTI-PLAYER (AND SINGLE-CART 'HOT-SEAT' MULTI-PLAYER) **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE • **WEB:** WWW.UBI.COM **PLAYERS:** 1-2

DS

BATTLES OF PRINCE OF PERSIA

Now the prince has got to use brains as well as brawn...



The story **twists and turns**, often putting you in command of other generals.

***Prince of Persia* as an action platformer, great. But as a turn-based strategy game? Prince moves four squares across the wall, buzzsaw trap moves three? Um, maybe not.**

In actual fact, it's turned out a lot like *Advance Wars*, with the Prince (and various other generals) leading armies all over the Middle East and India in the period between *Sands of Time* and *The Warrior Within*.

FAN-TACTIC

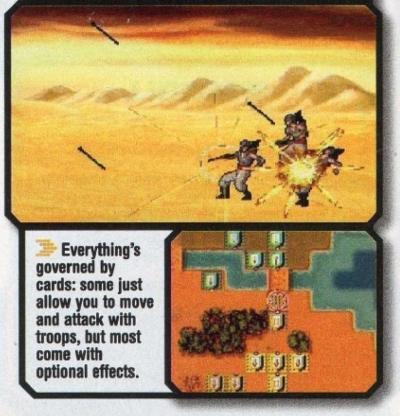
And, you know, it's also turned out *rather brilliantly*. The gameplay system, based around randomly drawn cards set in the *Prince of Persia* universe, is richly tactical. There's easily enough depth here to satisfy those of us who ate up the machinations of the Black Hole army, and it's easy to get into, too.

It's the kind of thing that will happily fast-forward you through huge chunks of the afternoon as you shift formations, have a go at the enemy with cunningly placed archers and pretend to be an army general. It's a shame it's not as complete a package as an *Advance Wars* game – you can construct your own card decks, but there's no map design, and for some reason it doesn't save any statistics – because it's just as engrossing.

FIT FOR A KING

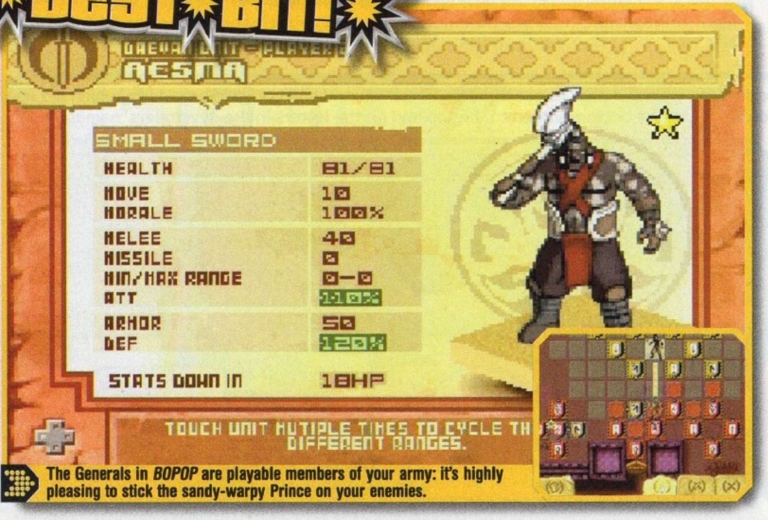
Fine presentation, a decent storyline, nine playable characters and a generous multi-player modes are simply the icing on the stake, as it were. GM

CARDIAC



Everything's governed by cards: some just allow you to move and attack with troops, but most come with optional effects.

BEST BIT!



SMALL SWORD
HEALTH 81/81
MOVE 10
MORALE 100%
MELEE 40
MISSILE 0
MIN/MAX RANGE 0-0
ATT 110%
ARMOR 50
DEF 120%
STATS DOWN IN 18HP

TOUCH UNIT MUTIPLE TIMES TO CYCLE TH DIFFERENT RANGES.

The Generals in *BOPOP* are playable members of your army: it's highly pleasing to stick the sandy-warpy Prince on your enemies.

JUDGEMENT

ADAM

GRAPHICS 76%
Well-represented battles, with nice ancient painting-style story interludes.

GAMEPLAY 90%
Absolutely smashing strategy. (And that's just us playing. Ahem.)

LIFESPAN 84%
Despite missing a few tricks, there's a meaty campaign and hearty multi-player.

OVERALL
87%
It's not dreamily fluid platforming, but it *is* an absolutely first-rate strategy game.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:....Star Wars Episode 3 DS, ...72%
WORSE THAN: ....Castlevania, 90%
WAIT FOR:.Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time, ...27th January

OUT: MARCH **DEVELOPER:** ALTUS **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO **ONLINE:** NO
SPECIAL: STYLUS **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE **WEB:** WWW.ATLUS.COM/TRAUMA_CENTER/ **PLAYERS:** 1

DS

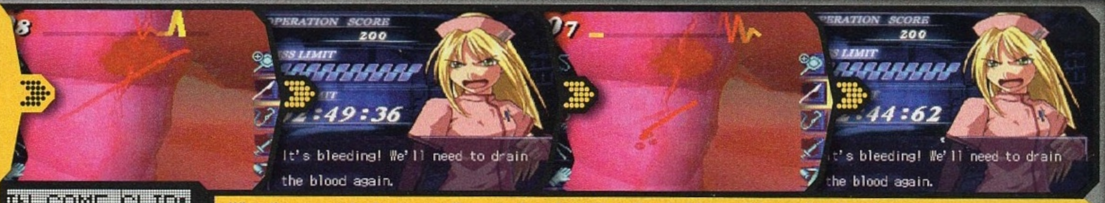
WHAT IS IT?

TRAUMA CENTER
UNDER THE KNIFE
NINTENDO DS

A slash-'em-up with a difference – this time you're saving lives instead of taking them. In theory.

- 15 operations
- Challenge mode

HOW IT PLAYS



It's bleeding! We'll need to drain the blood again.

IN-GAME CLIP: When the nurse gets shouty, we relieve our stress by getting all scalpel-happy. Bring on the tribunal.

TRAUMA CENTRE: UNDER THE KNIFE

Scalpel! Forceps! Stylus! Bucket! Body bag! Oh, crikey...

Years and years ago, just after the NHS stopped prescribing leeches, there was a PC game called *Life And Death*. It let you diagnose ailments, refer people to specialists and act like a 'proper' doctor, and it was a really good idea.

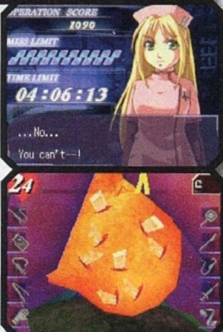
Unfortunately, it was rubbish for three reasons: 1. There was only one actual operation – an appendectomy – to do, 2. The 'blood' was just expanding red circles and 3. It didn't really feel like you were cutting someone up. Fortunately, *Trauma Centre* fixes all three of those things.

Using the stylus as a scalpel might seem an obvious touch, but what's surprising about *Trauma Centre* is how realistic the *other* surgical implements feel. Whether you're tweezing glass shards out of a man's abdomen with delicate flicks, patting down the edges of a bandage or zig-zagging your way through a set of stitches, the controls are so instinctive that you start to think that this surgery lark isn't all that tricky after all.

KNIFE EDGE DRAMA

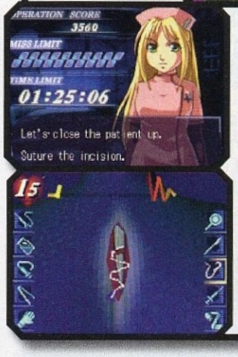
As you get more confident, cutting out tumours in less than five seconds and stop whacking the 'call!' button for advice at every stage, you actually start to wonder if you couldn't have a go at it in real life... until the vital signs start going haywire. There are plenty of operations to do, too – from suturing intestinal aneurisms to removing vocal polyps – and though it isn't exactly *Soldier Of Fortune*, there's plenty of gore. The story's rubbish, you can't skip the hefty chunks of mid-op banter or have any impact on your 'career', but *Trauma Centre's* still an excellent alternative to the usual platforming. Still, it'd be nice if there was a 'leech' button – some of us are traditionalists, y'know? GM

CP-AARGH!



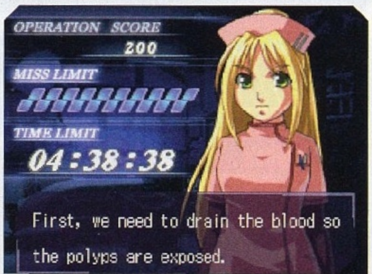
...No...
You can't--!

In one masterful bit of stylus use, you switch from plucking glass shards out of a man's heart – always pull in the direction of the wound, then swab it with antiseptic, amateur-surgery fans – to massaging his punctured organs with *Bemani*-style swoops of a hand.



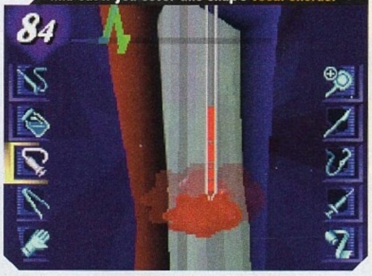
Let's close the patient up.
Suture the incision.

In another bit, we're connecting veins together with a bit of deft tweezage. Any time the patient gets a bit close to dying, you can dope them up with more tranquillisers and stabilise their heart rate, but that's technically sort of cheating.



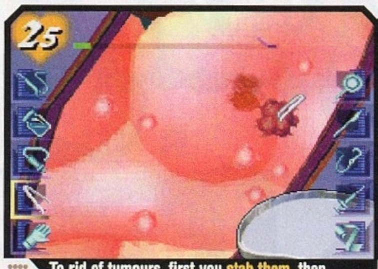
First, we need to drain the blood so the polyps are exposed.

Nurse Thompson's got a temper on her, as you'll find out if you sever this chap's vocal chords.

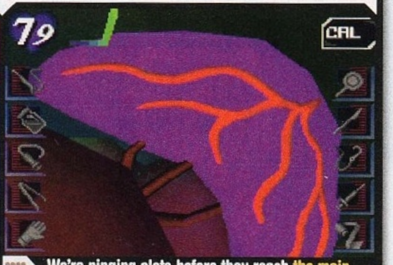


DOCTOR, DOCTOR...

In real life, surgeons specialise in a certain area. In *Trauma Centre*, you're a specialist and can handle anything from a quick stitch to – seriously – defusing a time bomb.

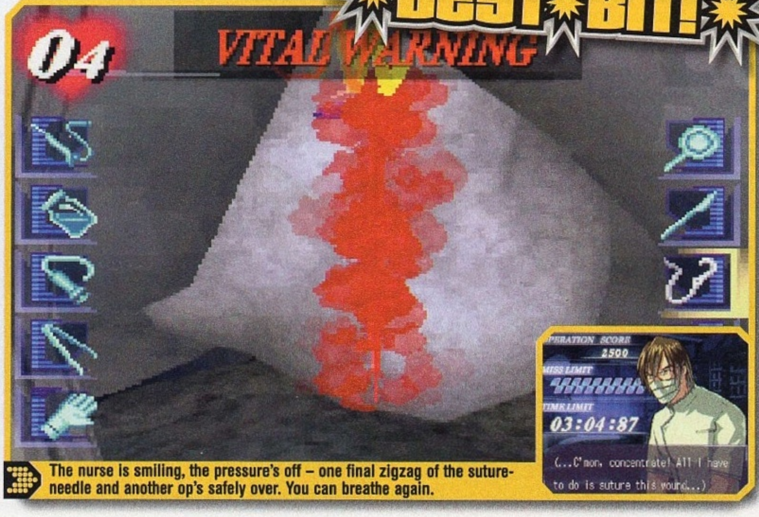


To rid of tumours, first you stab them, then drain the blood and slash the surrounding area.



We're pinging clots before they reach the main ventricle. It's like *R-type*, but a bit more serious.

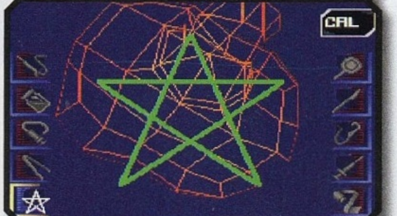
BEST BIT!



(...C'mon, concentrate! All I have to do is suture this wound...)

The nurse is smiling, the pressure's off – one final zigzag of the suture-needle and another op's safely over. You can breathe again.

HAIL SATAN!



OPERATION SCORE
0
MISS LIMIT
TIME LIMIT
99:99:99

Gah, no! I need to be quicker and more precise!

Dr Stiles can slow down time by *drawing a pentagram on his patient's chest*. Because he's in league with the devil. Probably.

JUDGEMENT

JOEL

GM LOVES

- The gentle 'plink' of an aneurysm hitting an op tray – don't ask why, it's just very satisfying
- Getting a 'Cool!' rating for slicing a navel open with one swift stroke

GM HATES

- It when a patient flatlines. Don't die on me, damn it!
- Ploughing through acres of pointless dialogue after every restart

GRAPHICS 75%

Basic manga stuff, with the odd flash of intestinal splatter for good measure.

GAMEPLAY 85%

Slash, stitch, drain, inject, laser - it's all beautifully intuitive.

LIFESPAN 50%

You'll be done in a weekend – it's probably best as a rental to be fair.

OVERALL

82%

Excellent. We want a resuscitation edition that lets you plug in the *Donkey Konga* bongos.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:............Theme Hospital, N/A
WORSE THAN:..............Phoenix Right: Ace Attorney, 90%
WAIT FOR:.......Your place in medical school
BEST PRICE:............£22.79, lik-sang.co.uk

OUT: NOW • **FORMAT:** DS • **PRICE:** £39.99 • **DEVELOPER:** CAPCOM • **PUBLISHER:** CAPCOM
• **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** GBA • **CONTACT:** WWW.CAPCOM.COM/PHOENIXWRIGHT • **PLAYERS:** 1

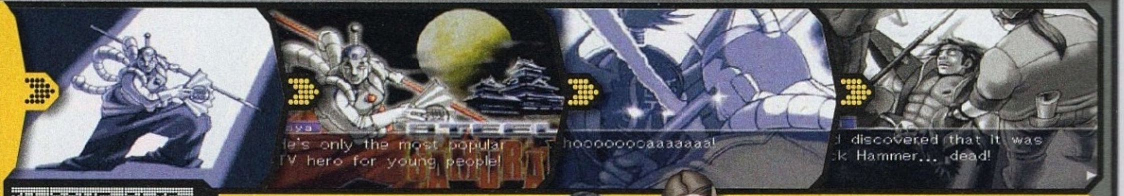
GAME BOY ADVANCE
DS

WHAT IS IT?

Not everyone is innocent until proven guilty! Ensure justice is done in this legal anime adventure.

- 2 gameplay phases: Investigation and Court
- 5 epic episodes

HOW IT PLAYS!

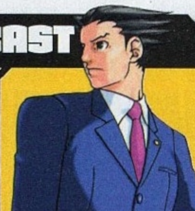

'e's only the most popular TV hero for young people!
hooooooooaaaaaaa!
d discovered that it was k Hammer... dead!

IN GAME CLIP: The Turnabout Samurai case is a examination of our obsession with cult TV shows.

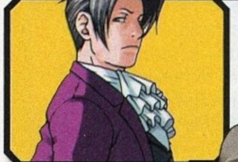
PHOENIX WRIGHT: ACE ATTORNEY

It's right on the money…

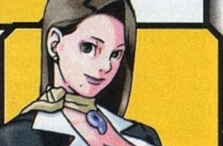
THE CAST



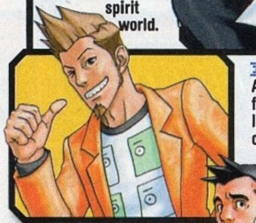
Phoenix Wright: Our hero, a wet-behind-the-ears yet prodigiously talented defence lawyer. Very sensitive about his spiky hair.



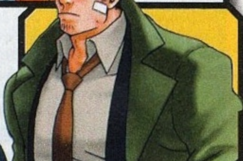
Miles Edgeworth: The ultra arrogant golden boy of the law courts, and Phoenix's arch rival.



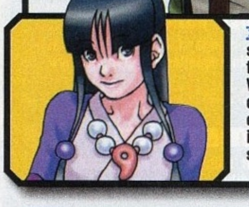
Mia Fey: This sexy attorney is Phoenix's mentor. Despite her tragic fate, she supports our hero from the spirit world.



Larry Butz: Accident prone, female-obsessed long-time buddy of Phoenix, "If something smells, it's usually the Butz".



Dick Gumshoe: Homicide detective. He has a history of making wrongful arrests.



Maya Fey: A spirit medium in training, and Wright's assistant on his first three cases. Young and innocent, she's still a useful aide.

Taking a five-year-old Japanese GBA adventure and beefing it up with just one extra chapter doesn't sound too exciting. Actually, it sounds rubbish. But in the weird, wonderful world of *Phoenix Wright*, it works. Really well.

This interactive graphic novel is split into two sections – evidence gathering/ questioning and courtroom drama. Use your stylus to dig up clues, manipulate evidence and pump witnesses for info. You'll feel more smug than Perry Mason as you gradually unthread the lies of the bad guys, and nothing beats roaring Objection! into the DS's mike in the middle of a cross-examination. However, beware of jumping in willy-nilly or you'll face the wrath of the judge. Make more than five errors of judgement and you can kiss that company Merc goodbye.

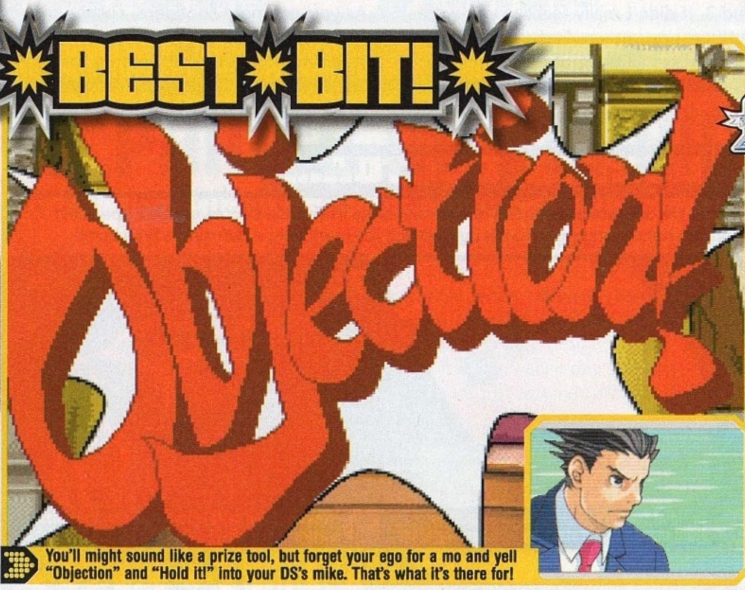
The game's five 'turnabouts' (all of which are linked to each other in some way) include saving your best mate from the electric chair, defending a martial arts TV star and protecting arch rival prosecutor Edgeworth from his corrupt mentor, Manfred Von Karma. In a welcome touch, the climactic new fifth turnabout makes use of the DS's unique abilities. You'll get the chance to search for blood stains by spraying luminal around, dust for fingerprints and manipulate 3D versions of evidence to uncover hitherto hidden clues. It's a hint of the potential of future instalments, and makes for intensely exciting sleuthing.

> "NOTHING BEATS ROARING 'OBJECTION' INTO THE MIKE"

COURT OUT

Reminiscent of ancient adventure classics like *Snatcher* and *Policenauts*, *Phoenix's* dialogue-heavy nature won't be everyone's cup of tea, but the mad Japanese humour, gorgeous anime visuals and the suspense of the courtroom battles against pantomime villain prosecutors who'll literally do *anything* to win helps it scoop our highest recommendation. The defence rests. GM

BEST BIT!



You'll might sound like a prize tool, but forget your ego for a mo and yell "Objection" and "Hold it!" into your DS's mike. That's what it's there for!

Other Formats

The closest alternative on your console:

Another Code	83%
Snatcher (Mega CD)	N/A

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GM LOVES	GM HATES
+ Finding contradictions in witnesses' testimonies + Dusting for prints! + Pretending we're important lawyers	- Lack of multiple paths - Relentless dialogue sapped our will to live - It's occasionally frustrating

GRAPHICS 87%
Visual chocolate, with stylish anime characters and cutesy special effects.

GAMEPLAY 90%
A text adventure it may be, but it's hilarious, emotional, gripping and tense.

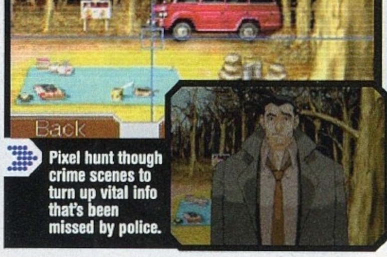
LIFESPAN 88%
Twenty hours of testimonies, objections and cross-examinations.

OVERALL
88%
Another delectable DS novelty, this attorney couldn't be more aptly named. Ace.

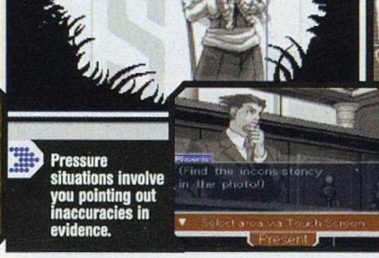
SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: Another Code, 83%
WORSE THAN: Being an ace attorney, just
WAIT FOR: Trauma Centre, March
BEST PRICE: £19.99, CD WOW

AM I WRIGHT?

Evidence is a precious commodity in *Phoenix Wright* – without it you don't stand a chance in court. Luckily, gathering it is a joy thanks to the DS's sublime stylus…

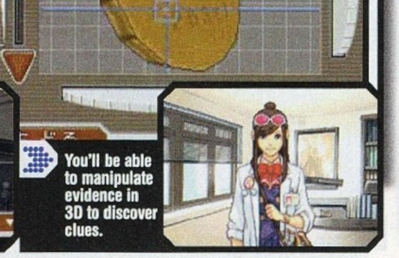


Pixel hunt though crime scenes to turn up vital info that's been missed by police.



(Find the inconsistency in the photo!)

Pressure situations involve you pointing out inaccuracies in evidence.



You'll be able to manipulate evidence in 3D to discover clues.

OUT: NOW • **FORMAT:** PS2 • **PRICE:** £19.99
• **DEVELOPER:** NEKO ENTERTAINMENT • **PUBLISHER:** DIGITAL JESTERS
• **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** PC, GBA • **WEB:** WWW.CRAZYFROGGAME.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-2

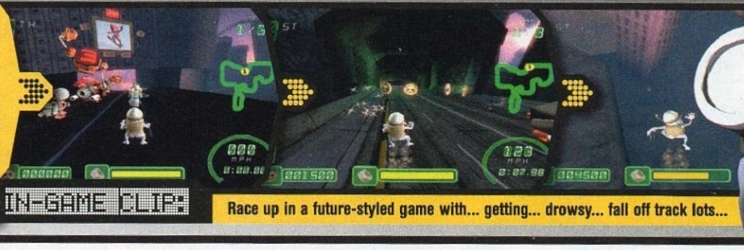
PS2 PC GAME BOY ADVANCE

WHAT IS IT?

Hateful, nonsense-spouting ringtone superstar gets his own game. Just in time for Xmas…

- 12 tracks
- Split-screen multi-player

IN-GAME CLIP:



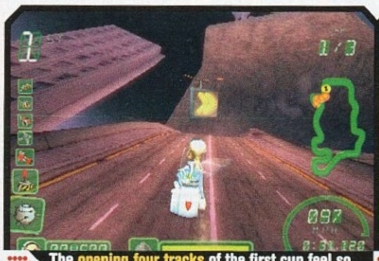
Race up in a future-styled game with… getting… drowsy… fall off track lots…

CRAZY FROG RACER

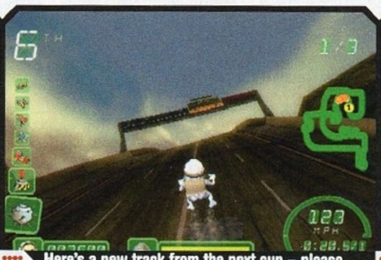
Who invited this loser? Millions of you…

COARSE DESIGN

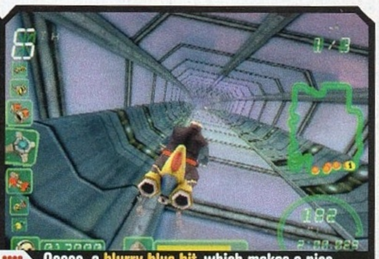
There are 12 tracks in total, but that's doing a disservice to the number 12. They're all set within a barely-changing city, with slight variations and the odd new area to keep things fresh. Well, more like less rotten…



The opening four tracks of the first cup feel so similar that our souls withered and died.



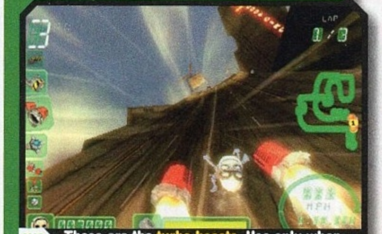
Here's a new track from the next cup – please notice the, erm, nigh-on identical roads.



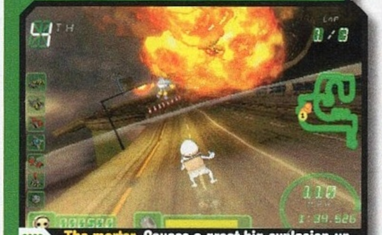
Ooooo, a blurry blue bit, which makes a nice change. More like this, please. Everywhere.

POWER OFF

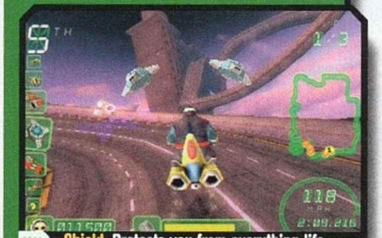
Collect coins as you race, and you can spend them on power-ups, which can be flicked between using L1 and L2. We'd rather stick with *Mario Kart's* more immediate weapon system.



These are the turbo boosts. Use only when you want to do worse in a race.



The mortar. Causes a great big explosion up ahead. Unsatisfying, to say the least.



Shield. Protects you from everything life throws at you, apart from happy-slapping.

He gets away with noise pollution on an international level, and has a voice that's probably going to be used as a weapon in World War 3: yes, it's everyone's favourite Crazy Frog!

As festive clangers go, *Crazy Frog Racer* isn't as broken as the woeful tour-de-farce that is 50 Cent's *Bulletproof*, but then it doesn't offer as generous a package for desperately dedicated fans. It's drab, dull and repetitive, more a *Wipeout* clone than a *Mario Kart* copycat, it feels stingy and rushed, and has the longevity of a tissue in a house fire. You'll get thrown from the track at almost every corner – it's a game that you'll need plenty of patience to play, as well as blinkers the size of dustbin lids to stop you noticing just how much worse it looks than the majority of games to hit PS2 in the past year.

FROGGER SLOGGER

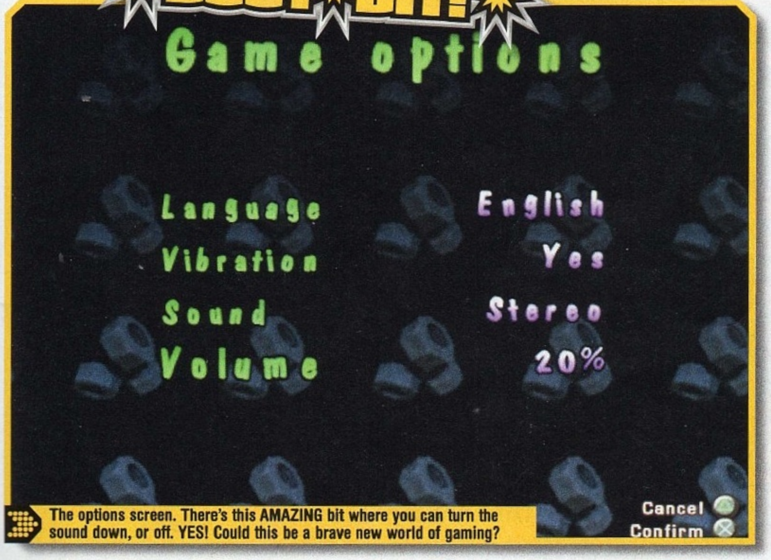
Crazy Frog is a lazy flog of the Xmas commercial love-in, a cheap and tacky trinket designed to wring a few more pounds out of those millions of mobile phone maniacs who made him the A-list amphibian he is today; a wonky-eyed hate figure who's made irritability into profitability.

If you enjoy watching *Crazy Frog* doing stuff, then you're going to buy it anyway, but even with the most rose-tinted of superfan vision, you may find it more MINGMINGMING than DING DINGDING. Otherwise, if you need something to splash your post-Xmas cash on, do this instead: take that £20, club together with someone else, and buy *LEGO: Star Wars*, and make the world a better, less infuriating place.

It's still one of the best licensed games of the past year, with an excellent two-player outing as a bonus. And you could squint a bit and pretend that Yoda is actually the Crazy Frog. But it's still so, so wrong. We don't mind such obviously brand-led games, provided they're actually fun with it. And this one's about as fun as watching paint dry, in bullet time, through a straw. GM

> "IT IS A LAZY FLOG OF A COMMERCIAL XMAS LOVE-IN"

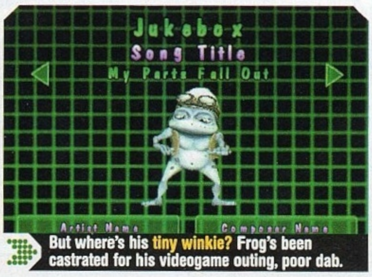
BEST BIT!



Game options

Language English
Vibration Yes
Sound Stereo
Volume 20%

The options screen. There's this AMAZING bit where you can turn the sound down, or off. YES! Could this be a brave new world of gaming?



But where's his tiny winkie? Frog's been castrated for his videogame outing, poor dab.

Other Formats

The closest alternative on your console:

DS	Mario Kart DS	92%
PSP	WipEout Pure	87%

JUDGEMENT

STEVE

GM LOVES	GM HATES
+ Actually, the noises as you scroll through the menus are funny rather than soul-crushing + Makes your PS2 warm, which is nice in winter	- How every track ends up looking and feeling the same - How easy it is to be flung from the course - Frog's MAD!!! face

GRAPHICS 38%

Like a slick PSone game. Minimum detail and little variety.

GAMEPLAY 45%

Not broken, but hard to play well and just as tricky to have fun with.

LIFESPAN 35%

So very little to unlock, and races get samey within record time.

OVERALL

38%

A budget price can't save this lame racing title, a cash-in best not getting cash-out for.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:….. Falling down some stairs
WORSE THAN: …… Crash Tag Team Racing, ……… 57%
WAIT FOR:….. Your next dental appointment
BEST PRICE:………….. £11.97, amazon.co.uk

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328285	KAISER CHIEFS - MODERN WAY
328286	MADONNA - HUNG UP
328287	SIMON WEBB - NO WORRIES
328292	ARCTIC MONKEYS - I BET YOU LOOK GOOD...
328296	GOLDFRAPP - NUMBER ONE
328299	BLOODHOUND GANG - FOXTROT UNIFORM...
328300	METALICA - NOTHING ELSE MATTERS
328333	THE DARKNESS - ONE WAY TICKET TO HELL AND BACK
328332	PHARRELL - CAN I HAVE IT LIKE THAT
328309	FRANZ FERDINAND - WALK AWAY
328310	SEAN PAUL - EVER BLAZIN
328317	BLACK EYED PEAS - MY HUMPS
328318	KANYE WEST - GOLD DIGGER
328319	THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS - DON'T CHA
328322	RIHANNA - PON DE REPLAY
328323	SUGABABES - PUSH THE BUTTON
328328	MARIAH CAREY - SHAKE IT OFF
328331	MYLO - DOCTOR PRESSURE
328340	GORILLAZ - DARE
328342	50 CENT - OUTTA CONTROL
328345	ROBBIE WILLIAMS - TRIPPIN

POLY CHART

321462	50 CENT - WINDOW SHOPPER
321460	GORILLAZ - DIRTY HARRY
321451	THE WHITE STRIPS - THE DENIAL TWIST
321452	THE MAGIC NUMBERS - LOVE IS A GAME
321447	SON OF DORK - TICKET OUTTA LOSERVILLE
321448	SIMON WEBBE - NO WORRIES
321439	THE DARKNESS - ONE WAY TICKET
321440	PHARRELL - CAN I HAVE IT LIKE THAT
321435	BLACK EYED PEAS - MY HUMPS
321436	GIRLS ALOUD - BIOLOGY
321411	KANYE WEST - HEARD EM SAY
321412	MADONNA - HUNG UP
321476	SEAN PAUL - EVER BLAZIN
321475	OASIS - LET THERE BE LOVE
321477	PUSSYCAT DOLLS - STICKWITU
321459	STEREOPHONICS - REWIND
321450	UNITING NATIONS - AI NO CORRIDA
321446	FIGHTSTAR - GRAND UNIFICATION
321472	SUGABABES - UGLY

REAL SOUNDS

328135	DUKES OF HAZZARD - GENERAL LEE
328138	FULL METAL JACKET - DRILL SERGEANT "DO YOU SUCK.?"
328031	THE GREATEST FEMALE ORGASM EVER!!
328040	ITALIAN JOB - BLOW THE BLOODY DOORS OFF
328051	PULP FICTION - THE PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN
328025	BEETLE JUICE - A LITTLE ACTION
328024	DR EVIL - THROW ME A BONE
328026	BUGS BUNNY - FARTING
328044	AUSTIN POWERS - ALOTA FAGINA
328045	BACK TO THE FUTURE - SERIOUS S***
328047	BO SELECTA MICHAEL JACKSON - SHAAMONE
328141	RINGTONE W**KER
328002	THE REAL PSYCHO ATTACK SOUND
328102	DRUM ROLL

TV AND FILM

322001	AIRWOLF
322007	THE MUPPET SHOW
322024	BENNY HILL
322057	THE DUKES OF HAZZARD
322194	THE GREAT ESCAPE
328014	ROBO COP - 20 SECONDS TO COMPLY
328061	AUSTIN POWERS - YOU'VE GOT MAIL BABY
328063	FRIENDS - JOEY - HOW YOU DOIN'?
328056	DONALD DUCK GETTING A BJ (HILARIOUS)
328047	BO SELECTA MICHAEL JACKSON - SHAAMONE
328024	DR EVIL - THROW ME A BONE

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329103
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ANGELINA Jolie
THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE
GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE I KILL PEOPLE
DAISY
HOT & HORNY
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324178
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326569
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326998
329460
PORN STAR
324018
324082
324088
324076
GIVE HEAD!
WIFE BEATER Really alcoholic
AC/DC
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NICE GIRLS SWALLOW
STAR WARS
LOVE 2 LOVE U
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329977
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329496
326151
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326572
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BURGLAR
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326608
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324052
329955
Paris
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324170

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329532

BOUNCING BOOBS
326223

SEXY BLONDE
324040

THE MATRIX
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326523	CELTIC
326524	CHARLTON
326525	CHELSEA
326527	ENGLAND
326529	GLASGOW RANGERS
326530	IRELAND
326531	LIVERPOOL
326532	REAL MADRID
326533	MANCHESTER UNITED
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326536	TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

VIDEOS

GREATEST MOTO X STUNT EVER
329846

KICK BOXERS BIG BREAK
326302

SPACE HOPPER FUN
324131

KUNG FU BEAR
329473

F1 FIREBALL
326312

CHIMP TAKING THE P***
326301

WATCH OUT
324128

COCKY DIVER
326303

ROLLING BUS
324133

RAT ATTACK
326316

SKYLINE Vs McLAREN
329468

MEGA EVO DRIFT
329621

SKYLINE STREET RACE
329619

200MPH SUPRA
324091

GTO DOUGHNUTS
324093

PORSCHE GT FLIP
329840

SCOOBY DOUGHNUTS
329674

TEMPTING SARAH
326260

WILD ANNA
329815

SWEDISH BLONDE
329465

SEXY BRUNETTE
326261

MASSIVE BOOBS
329446

NECK BREAKER
329449

SHOVEL SMASHER
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SEXY BLONDE BABE
329587

SAUCY BRUNETTE
326105

SEXY BLONDE BABE
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329472

FEISTY DOMINATRIX
324125

SAUCY BRUNETTE
324097

SAUCY SUSIE
324096

GREEN BIKINI BABE
326234

MORE VIDEOS

FUNNY

329448	BIKE WHEELIE FALL OFF
329833	TREADMILL BREAKER
329449	BREAK YA NECK
329830	BMX BALL BREAKER
326224	SMASH MARTIAN LAUGH
329471	SHOVEL HEAD SMASHING
329831	CRAZY SNOWBOARDER
326306	INSANE MOUNTAIN BIKE JUMP
326308	SKATER JUMP GOES WRONG
326317	LOONIE TRUCK SURFER

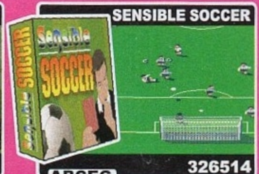
HORNY GIRLS

326001	NAUGHTY JODIE
329480	HOT ANDREA
329528	I LOVE TO PLAY
326055	AROUSED ELENA
326077	RUDE RED HEAD
329595	BOOB EXERCISE
329586	SAUCY LUCY
329610	SEDUCTIVE JEMMA
329816	WILD ON THE BEACH
326040	HOT STAIRCASE BRUNETTE
329819	SAUCY DANCER
326048	BLONDE BABE
326054	HOT BLONDE FUN
326104	MAYA IN PINK PVC
326166	RED HOT BABE
326164	SEE ME TOUCH FROM BEHIND

GAMES

COMPATIBILITY: A: NOKIA • B: MOTOROLA • C: SAGEM
D: SAMSUNG • E: SHARP • F: SIEMENS • G: SONY ERICSSON

PREDATOR
ABCDEG **326513**


SENSIBLE SOCCER
ABCEG **326514**

ACES TEXAS HOLD'EM
ABG **326808**

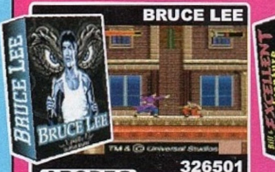
POOL CHALLENGE
A **326818**

COLIN MCRAE RALLY
ABCEG **326503**

SHREK 2 - PUSS IN BOOTS
ABCDEFG **326516**

BABEWATCH
ABDFG **326492**

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER
ABCDEG **326502**


BRUCE LEE
ABCDEG **326501**

BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE
ABCEG **326500**

TETRIS EXTREME SPORTS
ABE **326468**

THE MUMMY
ABDEG **326519**

MORE GAMES

CODE	GAME	COMPATIBILITY
326457	COBRA	A,B
326504	DESERT STORM	A,B,C,D,E,F,G
326469	PACIFIC STRIKE	A,B,E
326491	VEGAS BLACK JACK	A,B,D,F,G
326512	MR BEAN RACER	A,B,C,D,E,F
326515	SHREK 2	A,B,E,G
326517	THE MASK	A,B,C,D,G
326806	4X4 EXTREME	A,B,F,G
326811	CITY KNIGHTS	A,B,G
326815	KAO CHASE RACING	A,B,C,E,G
326506	CRICKET WORLD CH.	A,B,D,E
326817	NINJA MISSION	A
326821	WIRELESS BOXING	A,D,F,G
326803	CROC HUNTER	A,B,D,E,F,G
326816	LIMIT TEXAS HOLD'EM	A,B,D,F,G

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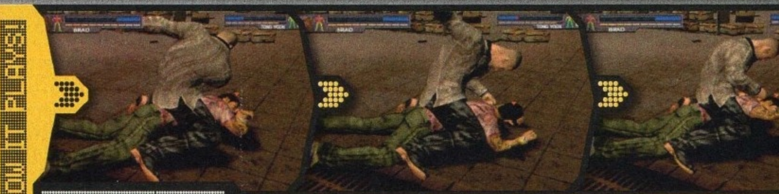
• OUT: FEBRUARY • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: NAMCO
• PUBLISHER: SONY • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.PLAYSTATION.CO.UK • PLAYERS: 1-4

WHAT IS IT?

A street brawling game made by Namco, who are responsible for *Soul Calibur* and *Tekken*.

- 100 one player missions
- 2 player co-op



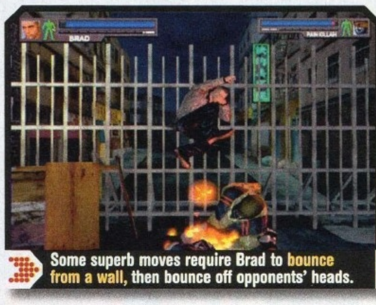
IN-GAME CLIP: The animation is extremely brutal, especially when the fight goes to the floor.

URBAN REIGN

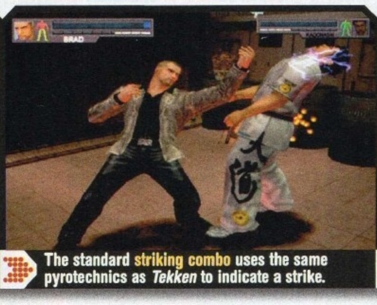
Looking back to put its best fist forward

SHIMMY A MAN AFTER MIDNIGHT

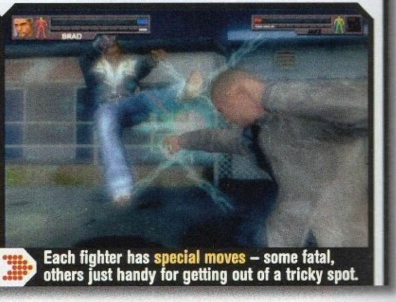
Urban Reign is so satisfying to play because of the sophisticated fighting system in place which doesn't have a block but a shimmy button that allows you to avoid blows. This allows you to remain in striking distance of your opponents when defending, so you can pounce forward to counter attack. Also, if you combine the dodge with a direction, you can parry blows and turn opponents – allowing you to strike or grab from the rear. It's incredibly simple to execute but requires much subtlety and thought to make it truly effective. Also, it makes the flailing thugs look like complete fools if done properly.



Some superb moves require Brad to bounce from a wall, then bounce off opponents' heads.



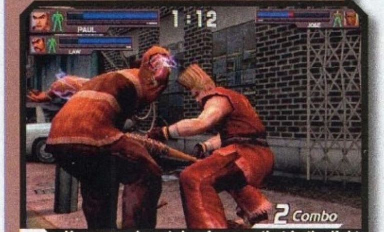
The standard striking combo uses the same pyrotechnics as *Tekken* to indicate a strike.



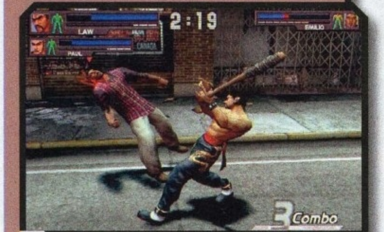
Each fighter has special moves – some fatal, others just handy for getting out of a tricky spot.

TOY-EEEE!

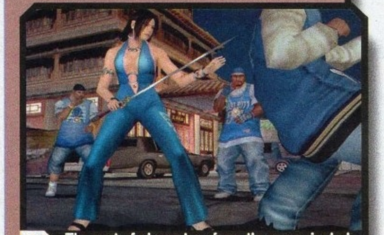
There's a total of 60 playable characters to unlock, many are just Thug No 1 and Bruiser No 2, but there's also a few household names just waiting to be discovered.



Your eyes do not deceive you, that is the light footed biker known as Paul Phoenix.



And here's his best mate, yelping restaurant entrepreneur Marshall Law.



The rest of characters from the game include the inappropriately dressed Shun Ying Lee.

While the scrolling beat-'em-up was in the sorry midst of its 10 year wilderness, the general lament among gamers was 'Why can't they just have a brawling game that uses the fighting system of *Tekken*'?

It seemed so obvious to those of us who didn't have to do the programming, but it was just as obvious that Namco thought *Tekken's* system was a good idea due to the presence of the *Tekken Force* mini-game. And now, just when we'd given up hope, *Urban Reign* arrives – the game we dreamt about.

The basic premise is classic scrolling-beat-'em-up: Brad Hawk, a chiselled-jawed man-mountain must clear the streets of gangs by punching them. Rather than scrolling between fights, the action is broken up into bite-sized missions, which keeps the pace up nicely.

REIGN SUPREME

What's not so primitive is the fighting, which has all the class and flow we've come to expect of *Tekken*. The big difference is that while in *Tekken* each move involves a complex multi-button command, here it's just case of hitting strike and a directional button.

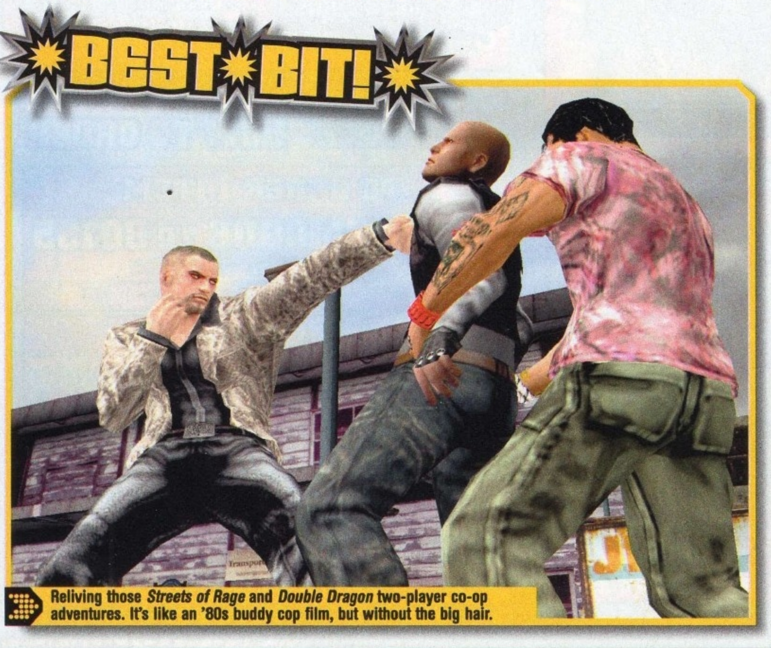
What gives *Urban Reign* a greater level of subtlety is that there's a dodge button, instead of a block, that allows you to defend and counter without straining the brain. Which is just as well, as the AI attacks are relentless, brutal and come from any direction.

It seems unfortunate, though, that *Urban Reign* has come out just as *The Warriors* is providing a more rounded experience, making Namco's effort look a little limited. But there's something very charming about its violence which is always vicious, but never nasty, and the way it inhabits the videogame land of stereotype street, where hard people can get away with snake skin jackets.

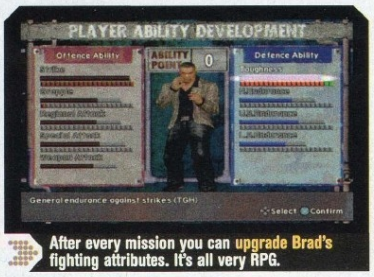
Beat Down, Spikeout, Crime Life and *Death by Degrees* have all attempted to make street fighting work – and have all failed miserably – so our fingerless gloves go off to *Urban Reign* for finally making the dream a reality. GM

> "URBAN REIGN IS THE GAME WE DREAMT ABOUT"

BEST BIT!



Reliving those *Streets of Rage* and *Double Dragon* two-player co-op adventures. It's like an '80s buddy cop film, but without the big hair.


PLAYER ABILITY DEVELOPMENT
Offence Ability
ABILITY POINTS 0
Defence Ability
General endurance against strikes (TGH)
Select Confirm

After every mission you can upgrade Brad's fighting attributes. It's all very RPG.

Other Formats

The closest alternative on your console:

XBOX	Spikeout: Street Battle	45%
CUBE	Def Jam Fight for New York	85%

JUDGEMENT DAVE

GM LOVES

- + The meaty and heavy feel of every strike
- + The totally unconvincing street-style
- + The excellent fighting system.

GM HATES

- - The Story Mode is too repetitive and short
- - Having to run and away and swig extra health
- - The snake skin jacket

GRAPHICS 58%
Generic, but the animation is great and the camera is more help than hindrance.

GAMEPLAY 78%
Hugely entertaining; brutal but smart enough to stop it being a button basher.

LIFESPAN 52%
The 100 missions don't take long, but this is a game you will want to repeat.

OVERALL

78%

A fantastic arcade scrapper, that's limited in scope but generous in old-skool face stomping.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: Crime Life: Gang Wars
WORSE THAN: The Warriors, 84%
ALSO OUT NOW: Final Fight: Streetwise
BEST PRICE: £29.99, play.com

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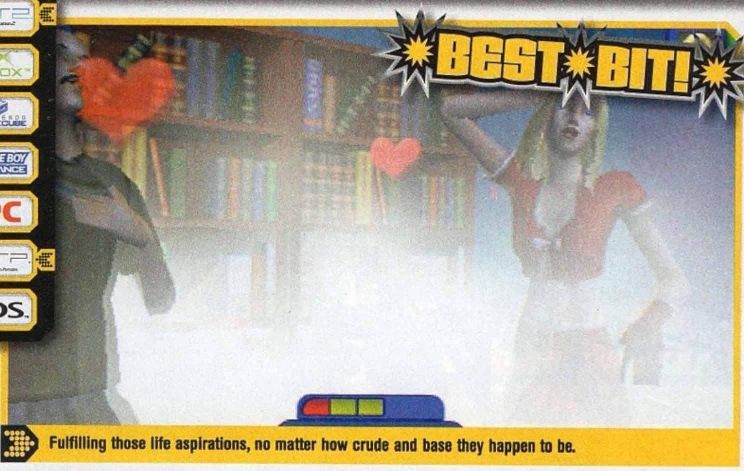
OUT: NOW **FORMAT:** PSP **PRICE:** £34.99
DEVELOPER: EA **PUBLISHER:** EA **WIFI:** ITEM SWAP **OTHER FORMATS:** PC, PS2, XB, GC, DS, GBA **WEB:** WWW.EAGAMES.COM **PLAYERS:** 1

BEST BIT!



Fulfilling those life aspirations, no matter how crude and base they happen to be.

THE SIMS 2

Giving you the R-P-Geebies...

One day the PSP might get the full *Sims* experience – open ended, hypnotically mundane, strangely addictive and simply magical. But for now we'll have to make do with this – focus grouped, scripted and very busy.

For fans of the PC game, this PSP version might seem very overly stressful, as from the moment you leave the create-a-Sim screen, you're bombarded with objectives.

WEIRD SCIENCE

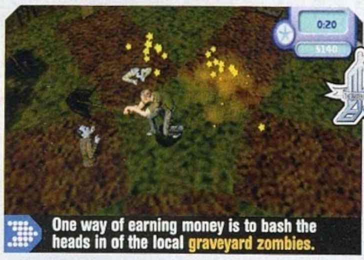
The first few teach you how the world works and it's just as well as it's all very peculiar. Your Sim must talk to people with a conversation mini-game, build up relationships so they reveal their deepest secrets, then sell these secrets for money. It's kind of like living the life of *The Mirror's* 3am Girls. With this money, you can start to carve a life out for you in Strange Town – a Twilight Zone where your Sim's sanity is tested to the limits by aliens and mad scientists. It's here you must do the everyday (furnish houses, eat, wash yourself, vomit) and the out of the ordinary (save robot women, exorcise ghosts, thwack zombies with shovels) to progress through the game.

R-P-G-P-P

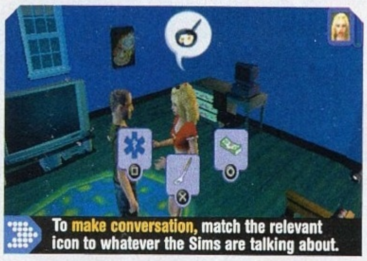
The result is not much like the original *Sims 2,* instead it's more of an RPG where you have to make sure your character has been to the toilet before going out on quests.

There is one Sim quality that has survived and that's addictiveness. It's like a human *Tetris* as you constantly strive to keep on top of desires, needs and wants to make everything line up neatly.

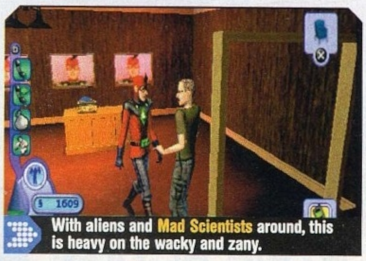
And until that happens you feel you cannot rest. So while it lacks any of the purity and spirit of the original *Sims 2,* it's still annoyingly playable. GM



One way of earning money is to bash the heads in of the local graveyard zombies.



To make conversation, match the relevant icon to whatever the Sims are talking about.



With aliens and Mad Scientists around, this is heavy on the wacky and zany.

JUDGEMENT

DAVE

GRAPHICS 68%
OK if occasionally a bit plain. The PSP handles the interior decorating well.

GAMEPLAY 64%
Hardly dynamic but it has an nagging quality that compels you to keep going.

LIFESPAN 76%
You can spend ages customising your Sim's world if the mission get tiresome.

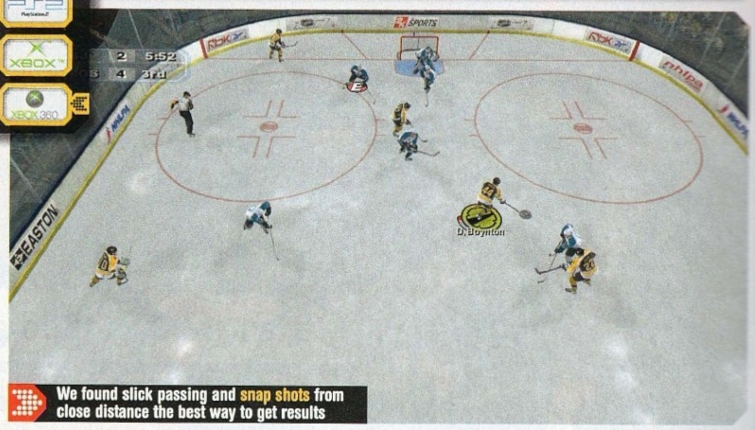
OVERALL

72%

Not really the *Sims*, more like an RPG with household chores. Entertaining nevertheless.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:......The Sims 2, GBA, 79%
WORSE THAN:............Animal Crossing DS 92%
WAIT FOR:..........Harvest Moon DS, March
BEST PRICE:............£29.99, amazon.co.uk

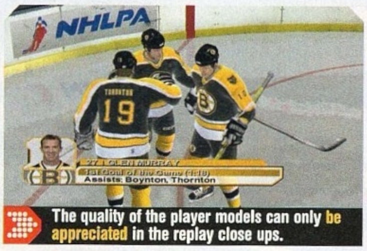
OUT: NOW **FORMAT:** XB 360 **PRICE:** £44.99 **DEVELOPER:** KUSH GAMES
PUBLISHER: 2K SPORTS **ONLINE:** VERSUS **SPECIAL:** CREASE CONTROL
OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XB **WEB:** WWW.2KSPORTS.COM **PLAYERS:** 1-4



We found slick passing and snap shots from close distance the best way to get results

NHL 2K6

The 360 gets Ice Hockey hi-def hair



The quality of the player models can only be appreciated in the replay close ups.

With any new console, you'll often find that the launch line up is more than generously catered for with sports games, and it's no different for the 360. They must be the easiest game to give a quick visual polish to and slap onto a new format.

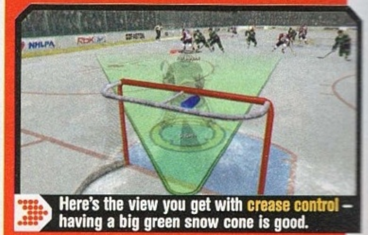
While this seems lazy, we must applaud 2K Sports for getting *NHL* to the 360 with all of the features of the Xbox version intact. This is in comparison to EA, who have been stripping their games to the bones.

2K Sports has even added something new: a new Crease Control function that allows you to control the keeper. So bravo to them.

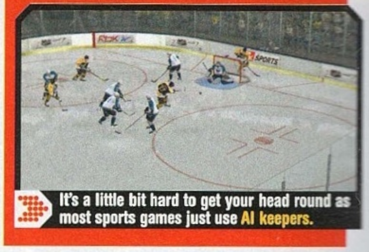
Apart from that, though, this is basically the old-gen version with a few prettier textures that might be noticeable on a two grand telly. It's a good and competent ice hockey game, but it's not going to rock your world, especially if you want it to stretch your new next-gen console in any way. GM

CREASE UP

When the opposition is bearing down on goal you can switch to this view to control the keeper. When the cone is green you've got the shot cover. It's an interesting idea but it needs to be refined, as you have to be certain that the opposition are actually going to shoot. Otherwise you're just concentrating on positioning the keeper rather than defending properly.



Here's the view you get with crease control – having a big green snow cone is good.



It's a little bit hard to get your head round as most sports games just use AI keepers.

JUDGEMENT

DAVE

GRAPHICS 65%
Identical to the Xbox version on normal TV, but some improvements on HDTV.

GAMEPLAY 69%
After picking up the basics, it lets you get on with banging heads and scoring.

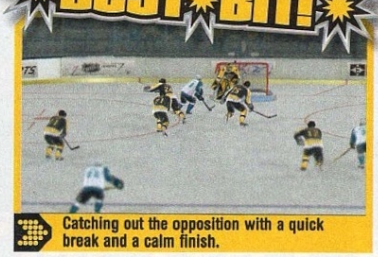
LIFESPAN 68%
Sports games always offer playing value especially when they're online.

OVERALL

64%

A good ice hockey game, but apart from one tweak it's just the same as the Xbox version.

BEST BIT!



Catching out the opposition with a quick break and a calm finish.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.......FIFA Xbox 360, 59%
WORSE THAN:............Being in a real team
WAIT FOR:.............................NHL 2K7, TBC
BEST PRICE:............£34.99, amazon.co.uk

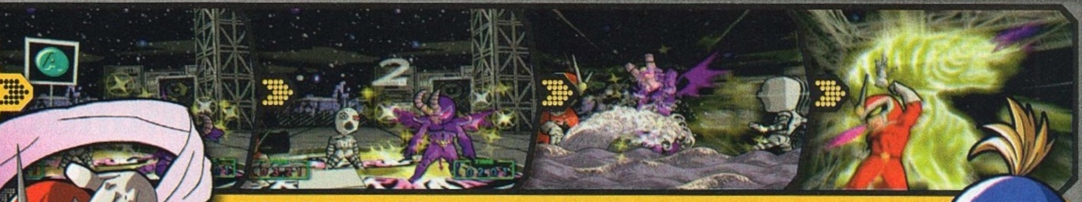
- **OUT:** 24TH FEBRUARY
- **FORMAT:** GC
- **PRICE:** £39.99
- **DEVELOPER:** CAPCOM
- **PUBLISHER:** CAPCOM
- **ONLINE:** NO
- **OTHER FORMATS:** PSP
- **WEB:** WWW.CAPCOM.COM
- **PLAYERS:** 1-4

WHAT IS IT?

The multi-player spinoff version of the Cube's hardest, most stylish game.

- Twenty-five stages
- Twelve characters, including Dante in the PSP version

HOW IT PLAYS!



Joe and Blade Master Alastor biff buttons to showcase their abilities against one quivering goon. Hardly fair, is it?

VIEWTIFUL JOE: RED HOT RUMBLE

Sequels a-go-go, baby...

With two games and a DS outing already under his belt, we were a bit worried that this beat-em-up spin-off to the Cube's most biff-tacular series might mark the point where Joe 'Did a Mega Man' – ie, appeared in so many games that only diehard fans of tight lycra suits would even care any more. Fortunately, though, it looks like that's still a long way off.

Basics, then: Joe uses almost the same control system as its platforming parents, tweaked to allow up to four people to fight at once, *Smash Bros style.* For instance, because it'd be a bit unfair to force one person to play at a snail's pace, you simply become nearly invincible instead of being able to 'see' and dodge bullets in slowmo time. At Mach speed, you dash around a lot faster, but nothing else speeds up.

If you're looking for the sort of devious time-tweaking puzzles seen in previous *Joes,* then, this isn't the game for you. But if the frenzied action in the early games was what buttered your muffin, then you'll be in heaven. Things start slow but quickly build up to Saturday-morning-TV-with-a-headful-of-caffeine levels of lunacy – by the second level, you're prancing about on the wing of a bi-plane, dodging strafe attacks from a dinosaur.

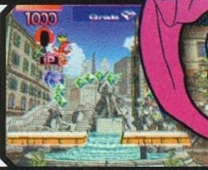
The one constant is the full-on lunacy of the game – it's constantly chucking bonuses, cartoon sound-effects and things to dodge at you. Which is why it's much better with a friend or two – at least then you know they're as confused as you.

A VIEWTIFUL LIFE

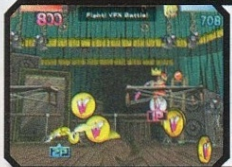
It isn't as clever or quite as well designed as previous games – and it reuses quite a lot of stuff – but for a burst of bubblegum fun, Joe doesn't disappoint. And hey, Capcom, don't change that suit any time soon – we all know what happened to *Mega Man...* GM

"YOU'RE ON THE WING OF A BI-PLANE, DODGING STRAFE ATTACKS FROM A DINOSAUR"

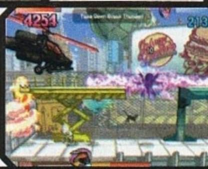
JOE FOR BROKE



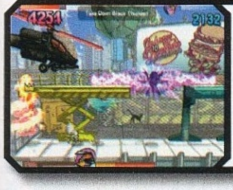
You're making a movie in *VJ:RHR,* but Captain Blue uses the kind of method filming that'd make Francis Ford Coppola want to cry.



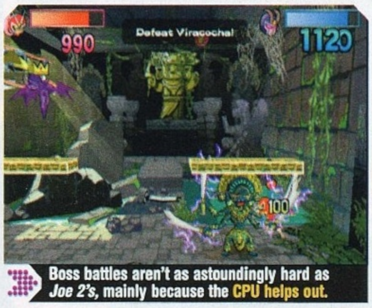
Here, we're smacking a mirror-Joe in the face to retrieve the most Viewty-spheres. There's no reason in the plot for it...



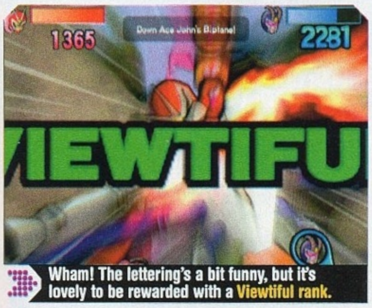
We're fighting a T-rex in a prop-plane – a clear nod to the early works of Buster Keaton. The person who does the most damage wins.



And Joe even references earlier games – who can forget *Black Thunder,* the helicopter boss from level one of the first game?

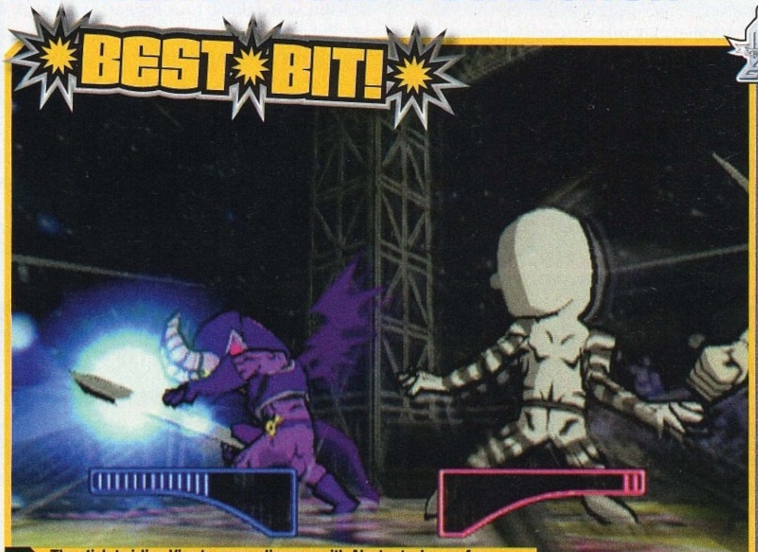


Boss battles aren't as astoundingly hard as *Joe 2's,* mainly because the **CPU helps out.**



Wham! The lettering's a bit funny, but it's lovely to be rewarded with a **Viewtiful rank.**

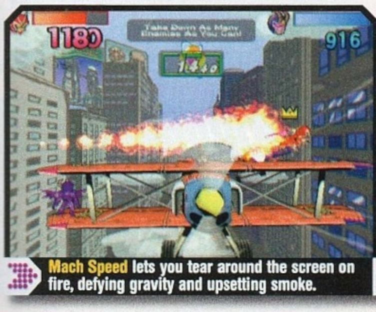
BEST BIT!



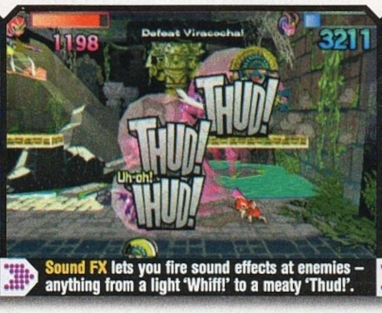
The stick-twirling Viewty-game climaxes with Alastor teeing up for some hurtage like Tiger Woods with a massive pointy stick.

YOU'RE VIEWTIFUL

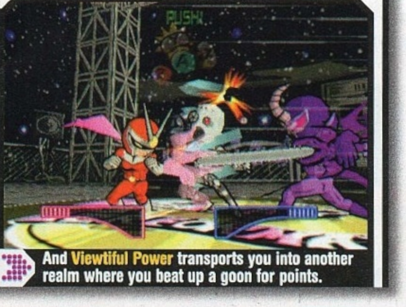
Joe's powers have changed slightly for *Red Hot Rumble:* instead of gradually building them up, he grabs them one at a time, like *Powerstone's* gems. And once you've actually got them, they aren't the ones you know and love...



Mach Speed lets you tear around the screen on fire, defying gravity and upsetting smoke.



Sound FX lets you fire sound effects at enemies – anything from a light 'Whiff!' to a meaty 'Thud!'.



And **Viewtiful Power** transports you into another realm where you beat up a goon for points.

Other Formats

The closest alternative on your console:

PS2	Viewtiful Joe	90%
CUBE	Viewtiful Joe DS	review next issue
XBOX	Blinx 2: Masters of Time and Space	72%

JUDGEMENT

JOEL

GM LOVES

- + Slapping skeleto-goons up into the air with a Viewtiful uppercut

GM HATES

- - The lack of proper puzzles of the classic slow-down-the-propeller variety
- - Things get really hectic and you can't tell what's going on

GRAPHICS 85%
Lovingly detailed and colourful – why can't more games be as stylish as *Joe?*

GAMEPLAY 82%
All of the action of previous games, but none of the brain-teasing cleverness.

LIFESPAN 85%
Nowhere near as hard as previous *Joes,* but great fun with multiple players.

OVERALL

82%

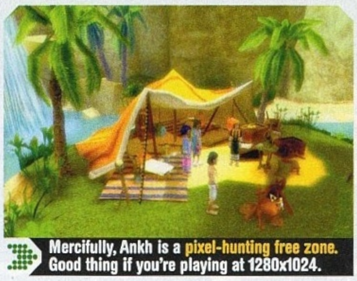
As spin-off sequels go, this one's remarkably faithful to the spirit of the original.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:................Onimusha 2, 90%
WORSE THAN: ....Viewtiful Joe, 90%
WAIT FOR:............................... Okami, 2006
BEST PRICE:............ £33.87, lik-sang.co.uk

PC
- **OUT:** NOW • **FORMAT:** PC
- **DEVELOPER:** DECK 13 • **PUBLISHER:** BHV SOFTWARE
- **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE
- **WEB:** WWW.ANKH-GAME.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1

ANKH

It's a Pharaoh laugh...


Mercifully, Ankh is a pixel-hunting free zone. Good thing if you're playing at 1280x1024.

Out of the endless swatches of first person shooters and gangsta comes that rarest of genres – a bona fide point and clicker!

After Egyptian slacker Assis inadvertently releases an ancient death curse, you guide the tyke around a less than historically accurate ancient Egypt full to bursting with comedy stereotypes and LucasArts-style humour.

Ankh's inspired decision to combine a mouse-driven interface with a decent 3D engine immediately resolves the horrid control problems that have plagued recent graphic adventures like *Escape from Monkey Island* and *Broken Sword: The Sleeping Dragon.*

Intermittently amusing and engaging in a cheesy kind of way, *Ankh* is a decent stab at a genre that's not exactly overflowing with talent. Awful voice acting, though.

REVIEWER: ROB TAYLOR

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL

Not a patch on *Broken Sword* or *Monkey Island*, but it'll pass the time.

88%

PSP
- **OUT:** NOW • **FORMAT:** PSP • **PRICE:** £34.99
- **DEVELOPER:** UBISOFT • **PUBLISHER:** UBISOFT
- **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** PS2, XB, GC, XB 360, PC, DS • **WEB:** WWW.UBI.COM/US/ • **PLAYERS:** 1

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

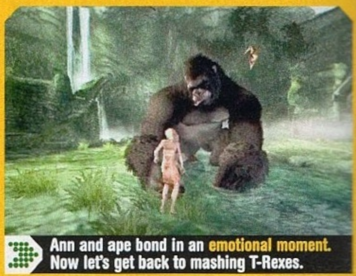
He came, he saw, he Kong-uered...?

The ape's escaped onto PSP, but is it top banana or just... bananas?

There's no denying that handheld *King Kong* is an immense technical achievement. Apart from minor touches (like Jack Black and co. not hanging around by your side during the first few hours), this is essentially the same visual marvel that wowed us on 360 last month. And that's not a bad thing.

Unfortunately, as *Coded Arms* proved, the PSP's control layout simply isn't suited to the unique demands of the first-person shooter. When you're gliding through the jungle with the big ape himself, cracking dino skulls and hurling raptors into ravines, *Kong* feels like magic.

Sadly, the frustrating FPS bits are truly tragic. Pity that.


Ann and ape bond in an emotional moment. Now let's get back to mashing T-Rexes.

REVIEWER: ROB TAYLOR

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL

A slice of monkey business hamstrung by nightmare controls.

78%

PS2 PC
- **OUT:** NOW • **FORMAT:** PS2 • **PRICE:** £24.99
- **DEVELOPER:** METRO3D • **PUBLISHER:** M8
- **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** PC
- **WEB:** HTTP://WWW.M3DEUROPE.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1

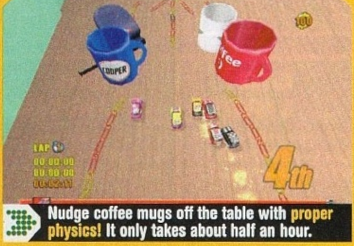
MINI DESKTOP RACING

All the fun of a shopping trolley on syrup...

It's *Micro Machines,* with a Mini licence, on a tabletop. Now this could have been great: there's something about the high-flying perspective that got us very excited about tracks where 'bridges' means 'plastic rulers', tracks are marked out by paper clips and Post-It notes warn you of upcoming jumps.

The problem: there's a proper physics engine in here. *Sounds* good – but it actually means getting irretrievably stuck on an HB pencil, or landing awkwardly after a jump and lying on our side like a wounded animal for the rest of the race.

And the handling is just taking the pistons – no surprise that even the PS2-controlled cars regularly sail off the tabletops to a carpety doom.


Nudge coffee mugs off the table with proper physics! It only takes about half an hour.

REVIEWER: MARK GREEN

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL

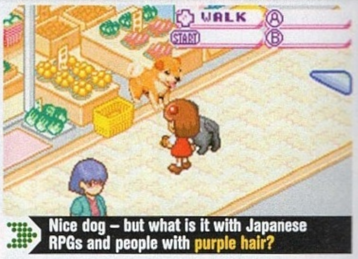
Neat retro racing made nasty by Newton's laws. Steer clear.

55%

GAME BOY ADVANCE
- **OUT:** NOW • **FORMAT:** GBA • **PRICE:** £29.99
- **DEVELOPER:** MTO • **PUBLISHER:** UBISOFT
- **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE
- **WEB:** WWW.DOGZGAME.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1

DOGZ

A dog's dinner of a virtual pet sim...


Nice dog – but what is it with Japanese RPGs and people with purple hair?

It's not fair to slap this on the nose for copying the canine runaway success, *Nintendogs* – *Dogz* is 70-years-old (in dog years), and the Classic Game Boy version was faking four-leggers way back in 1999.

But compared to Ninty's cute-'em-up, this is ruff stuff. Big and bright the visuals may be, but your stupid cartoon dog (whose main skill is slipping over on kitchen tiles) is nowhere near as much fun as a furry, funny *Nintendog.* Especially because you're forced into *Sims*-style activities like cleaning the floor. And he doesn't even find pirate hats when you take him for a walk.

The only stray fun to be had with *Dogz* is playing the 'Puppy Reversi' mini-game. Which says a lot, really.

REVIEWER: MARK GREEN

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL

Big sad eyes don't work on us – *you're a very bad boy.*

38%

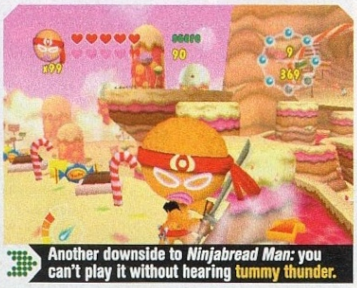
PS2
- **OUT:** NOW • **FORMAT:** PS2 • **PRICE:** £19.99
- **DEVELOPER:** METRO3D • **PUBLISHER:** M8
- **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE
- **WEB:** HTTP://WWW.M3DEUROPE.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1

NINJABREAD MAN

Videogame food poisoning...

Just because you've come up with a funny name for a game, doesn't mean you should actually *make* it.

The Ninjabread Man is a garish, pig-ugly, barely-animated, slip-slidy controlled, angrifying unplayable mess of a platformer. We've been playing games for 20 years – and it took us almost another two decades to get off the first level of this, mainly because the slightest nudge of the analogue stick makes the edible hero scamper straight off a ledge. Yes, it's the first platform hero who doesn't know how to deal with platforms; he can't even walk up a flat surface properly. Only £20? This isn't even worth 20p of your cash.


Another downside to *Ninjabread Man:* you can't play it without hearing tummy thunder.

REVIEWER MARK GREEN

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL

One of the worst games ever. Run away from *Ninjabread Man,* as quick as you can.

11%

PC
- **OUT:** NOW • **FORMAT:** PC • **PRICE:** £9.99
- **DEVELOPER:** EA • **PUBLISHER:** EA
- **ONLINE:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE
- **WEB:** WWW.THESIMS2.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1

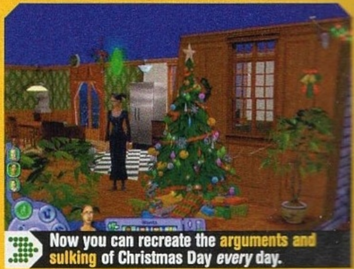
THE SIMS 2 CHRISTMAS PARTY PACK

'Tis the season to increase end-of-year profits...

Scrooge really has got nothing on EA. Their Christmas 'gift' is an expansion pack featuring content that's been freely downloadable from their website *for a whole year.* You don't even get a manual – just a flyer for more of EA's wallet-chasing wares. Hardly the spirit of Christmas, now is it?

It's hard to recommended this even if you're living offline. Strangely, Hallowe'en and Easter-related bits and bobs have been thrown in for no reason, unless EA wanted to beef up the otherwise extremely dull Christmas extras.

And all of these extras are just visual props – it's a thrill to see Santa tumble down the chimney, but otherwise there's nothing to do with your decorations, stockings, tree and presents except stare. Baby Jesus must be rolling in his manger.


Now you can recreate the arguments and sulking of Christmas Day *every* day.

REVIEWER: MARK GREEN

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL

Yule be better off buying an Internet connection and downloading it.

30%

Mobile Games

01

MEDIEVAL COMBAT age of glory
fight!
Gamespot 'very impressive'

MEDIEVAL COMBAT

play 49 Medieval Combat: Age of Glory plunges you into the heart of fantastical medieval mythology. Demons or humans, it is up to you to choose which of the five initial combatants you will side with.

02

2005 REAL FOOTBALL
'Best Mobile Game ever'

2005 REAL FOOTBALL

play 43 2005 Real Football puts you at the helm of one of 32 national teams or one of 16 prestigious clubs in 5 varied game modes (Quickplay, Exhibition, Cup, League and Training). Thanks to the FIFPRO license, the game also features real-life players.

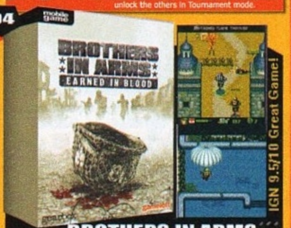
03

MIDNIGHT POOL
Awesome!
Gamespot 9.2/10

MIDNIGHT POOL

play 39 Midnight Pool™ brings you into the competitive universe of a genuine American pool hall. You will face 8 original players, none of whom are ever at a loss for words! Choose from 3 available characters, then unlock the others in Tournament mode.

04


BROTHERS IN ARMS EARNED IN BLOOD
IGN 9.5/10 Great Game!

BROTHERS IN ARMS

play 51 June 1944: The Allies land on the beaches of Normandy to liberate the continent...You'll have to show your brothers in arms how to face the terrible ordeals that await you so that they will follow you on the road to liberty...

05

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY
Gamespot 8.4/10

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY

play 41 This time, Sam Fisher has to do his best to prevent a potentially explosive new World War in the Pacific. Using Stealth moves, you can hide even closer to your enemies, grab guards to cut their throats and kill them even more silently.

06

ASPHALT 2
Gamespot 9/10. 'Superb'

ASPHALT URBAN GT2

play 53 You are taken out on 8 tracks inspired by genuine places. Each track is part of a specific graphic universe and includes different tunnels and elevations that enable you to perform impressive jumps,among other things ...

To order a game just text the Item Code to 60111 eg. to order Asphalt Urban GT2 text play 53 to 60111

powered by gameloft

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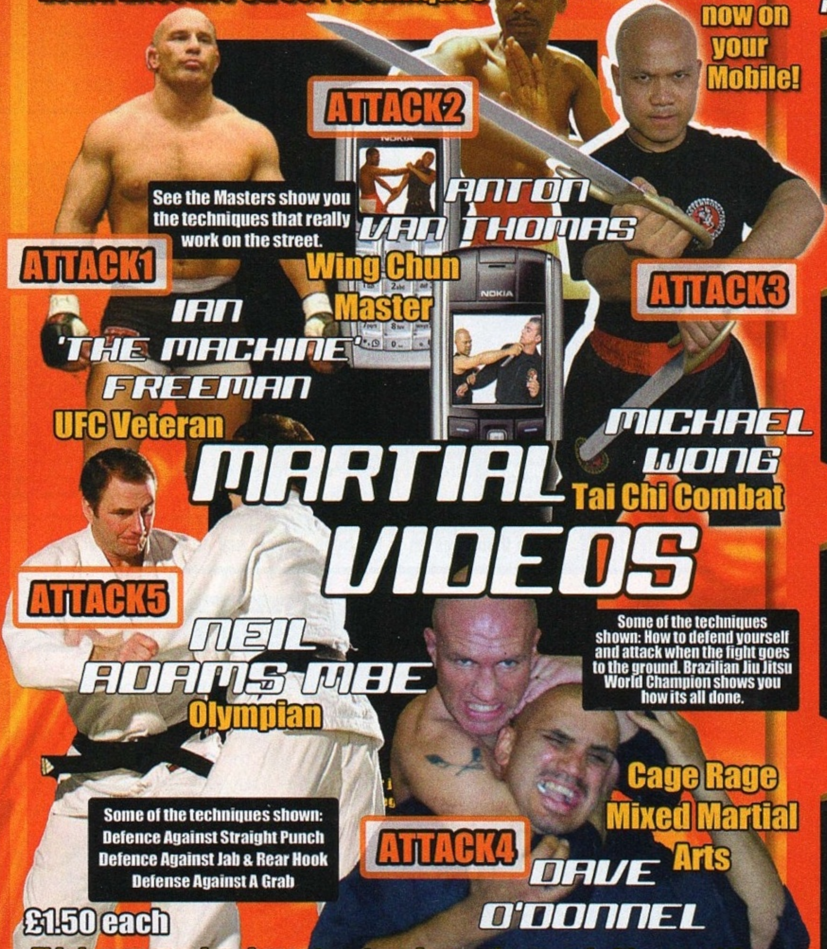

See the Masters show you the techniques that really work on the street.

ATTACK1

IAN 'THE MACHINE' FREEMAN

UFC Veteran

ATTACK2

ANTON VAN THOMAS

Wing Chun Master

ATTACK3

MICHAEL WONG

Tai Chi Combat

MARTIAL VIDEOS

ATTACK5

NEIL ADAMS MBE

Olympian

Some of the techniques shown:
Defence Against Straight Punch
Defence Against Jab & Rear Hook
Defense Against A Grab

Some of the techniques shown: How to defend yourself and attack when the fight goes to the ground. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu World Champion shows you how its all done.

ATTACK4

DAVE O'DONNEL

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£1.50 each

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Ringtones

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Chun-Li	5
E-Honda	6
Dhalsim	7
Zangief	8
M-Bison	9

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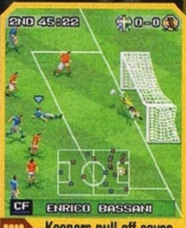
MOBILE MASTER

Doom is upon us as Mobile Master goes on a mission to Mars...

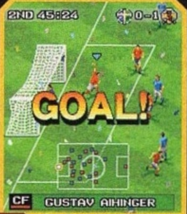
NEWS

RINGING 11



Keepers pull off saves in typical *PES* fashion.

We all know about (and love) the PSP version, but now the undisputed footy champ *Pro Evolution Soccer* is set to flaunt its silky skills on a mobile near you. News is thin on the ground at the moment, but here's what Mobile Master's learned so far...



It all goes mental when you score.

- It looks uncannily similar to the old SNES *PES* (Nice)
- It'll feature the AI from *PES 5* (Amazing!)
- It's single-player only – so no Bluetooth. (Bummer)

Expect to see *Pro Evo Soccer* mobile sometime around March.

CAPCOM COMPO!

Haven't got a copy of *Capcom Classics* yet? Good job we've got 10 PS2 and 10 Xbox copies to give away then. This mother of all compendiums contains such luminaries as *Forgotten Words*, *Final Fight* and *Gunsmoke*, and is provided courtesy of kindly Capcom. To enter, you'll first have to subscribe to **Capcom World on O2's i-mode service** (subscription is free at www.O2.co.uk/imode until the end of 2006) then register your highest score on WW2 shooter, *1942*. The top 20 highest scoring players win a copy of the game. Simple! In case you didn't know, Capcom World – via O2's exclusive i-mode service – is a hub that lets you download arcade classics like *1942*, *Resident Evil* and *Street Fighter 2* as well as related wallpapers and ringtones. It's a brilliant new way to download brilliant old games. So what are you waiting for?

1942: a classic arcade shooter.

MOBILE TOP 5!

HAVE RED-HOT FUN ON YOUR PHONE WITH THESE ESSENTIAL DOWNLOADS...

1. DOOM RPG

Those Martians have never been scarier.

2. FIFA 06

A *FIFA* game that isn't balls? Amazing.

3. THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

Mr Diesel and his crew rev back in style.

4. METAL SLUG MOBILE IMPACT

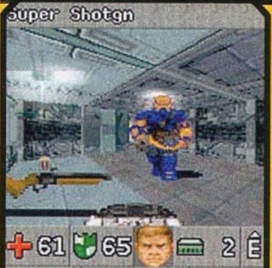
SNK knows how they make it so lovely.

5. THE CHAOS ENGINE

Pick a merc and let the carnage commence.

DOOM RPG

WEBSITE:...WWW.JAMDAT.COM

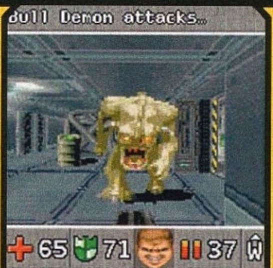


Uh oh, mini-gun alert! Can we grab the super shottie in time?

When is *Doom* not *Doom?* When it's an RPG! New stuff includes item kiosks, NPCs, computer terminals turn-based combat, while the decision to remix existing *Doom/Doom2* sprites and tunes add nostalgia.

The change of pace from FPS to RPG as your marine roots around Mars feels odd at first. But soon you're sucked into a new *Doom* experience – earning XP through kills, beefing up your stats and tackling ever bigger and badder beasties over the 10 vast missions.

Specific baddies hate certain weapons, so think before you open fire. Gripping and gory, *Doom* RPG is mobile gold.



One of gaming's most feared sights – charged by a Bull Demon!

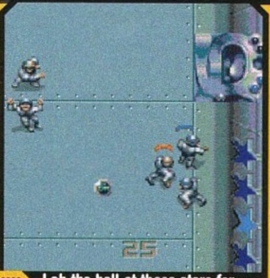
OVERALL More than lives up to the hype. This is hell on your handset.

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

91%

SPEEDBALL 2 BRUTAL DELUXE

WEBSITE:...WWW.GLU.COM

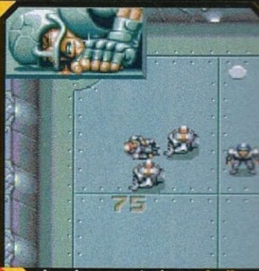


Lob the ball at those stars for points, or go for the multiplier...

Fancy reliving some painful memories of bruising Amiga sporting classic *Speedball 2?* Then get ready to foul your way to violent victory with the infamous *Brutal Deluxe.*

The transfer market, the gym, power ups – everything's here, buffed up and shinier than ever. With league, cup and manager modes, this is retro heaven. Add to this the intense Bluetooth multi-player and we're sold.

Success with *Speedball* always did require a decent microswitched joystick. The mobile controls will have you hurling your handset at the wall with rage, but persevere because beneath the initial frustrations lies Bitmap Brothers genius.



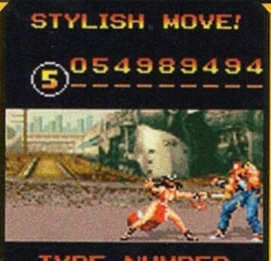
Imagine a sport where crippling foes earns you points (cackles).

OVERALL The *PES* of its day, *Speedball 2* still has the heart of a champ.

85%

KING OF FIGHTERS M2

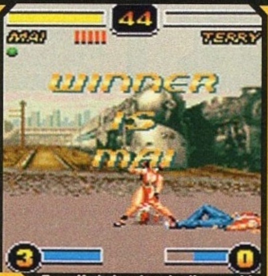
WEBSITE:...WWW.IPLAY.COM



Typing in numbers mid-scrap sounds rubbish, but it works.

Mobile keypads are clunky and fiddly at the best of times, especially for our fat fingered friends. They're also rubbish for the majority of games but, ironically, they are perfect for fighters requiring more combinations than the safe down your local Barclays.

King of Fighters keeps things simple, so for the main part it's just an enjoyable button masher.



Even if she's a barely discernable glob of pixels, we still fancy Mai.

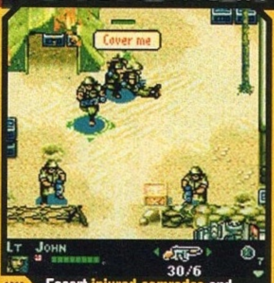
But M2 has managed to cram in some tasty touches, including character specific special moves. These devastating attacks are accessed via mini-games in the middle of bouts. Miniaturised Terry, Mai and co. look as cute as buttons, while cheekily taunting battered rivals to beef up your power meter never gets old!

OVERALL Spot-on controls mean *King of Fighters* reigns supreme as our top mobile beat-'em-up.

81%

BROTHERS IN ARMS: EARNED IN BLOOD

WEBSITE:...WWW.GAMELOFT.COM

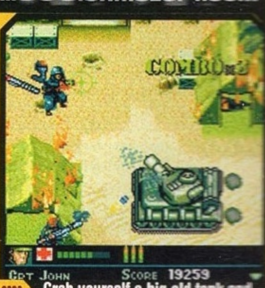


Escort injured comrades and medics across the African desert.

Bet you never thought you'd lead the US charge along Omaha beach while sitting on the bus!

Infinitely more action-orientated than its console cousins, you won't find much flanking or suppressing to be found on the mobile version of *Band of Brothers: Earned in Blood.* Instead, you'll blast the Wehrmacht into submission using an array of rifles, machine guns, flamethrowers, grenades and even tanks.

The pulsating missions might seem varied (be prepared to protect a medic or demolish a key enemy bunker) but they are over way too quickly. But if you loved blasting away on classics like *Ikari Warriors* or *Mercs* when you were a wee nipper, you'll find a lot to love here.



Grab yourself a big old tank and rack up some major combos.

OVERALL Bright, bloody and a heck of a lot of fun, this is one band definitely worth joining.

80%

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WWW.TXTUK.CO.UK

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MOBILE GAMES

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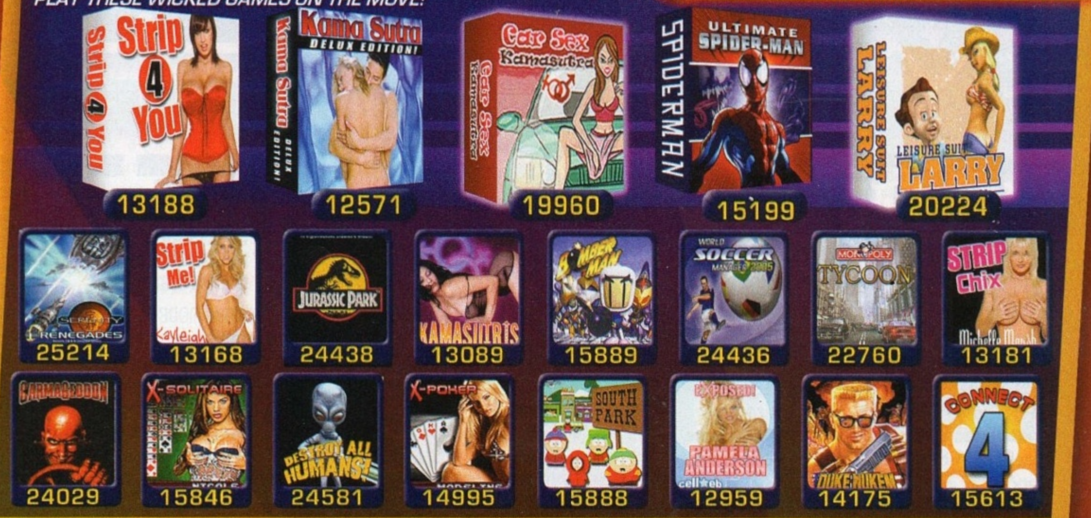
Strip 4 You
13188
Kama Sutra DELUX EDITION!
12571
Car Sex Kamasutra
19960
ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN
15199
LEISURE SUIT LARRY
20224
25214
Strip Me!
13168
JURASSIC PARK
24438
KAMASUTRA
13089
BOMBERMAN
15889
WORLD SOCCER
24436
MONOPOLY TYCOON
22760
STRIP Chix
13181
CARMAGEDDON
24029
X-SOLITAIRE
15846
DESTROY ALL HUMANS!
24581
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DUKE NUKEM
14175
CONNECT 4
15613

RINGTONES

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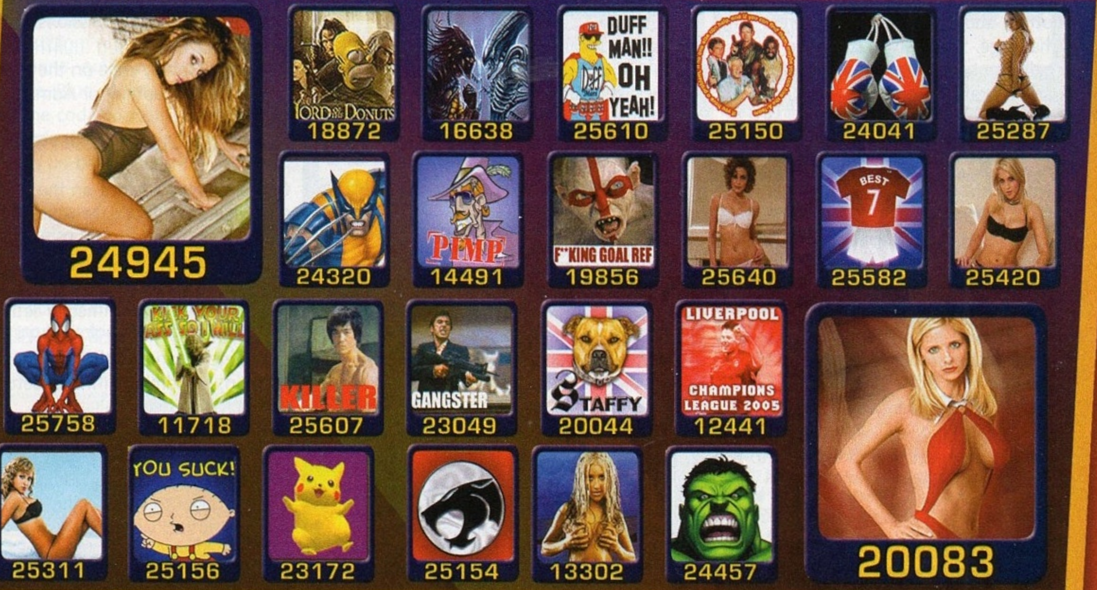
25054	24728	OASIS	let there be love
25219	25035	DHT	Listen To Your Heart
25051	24727	FRANZ FERDINAND	Walk Away
25547	24284	RIHANNA	if its lovin that...
25052	24635	SEAN PAUL	ever blazin
25398	25396	BABYSHAMBLES	albion
25314	24637	STEREOPHONICS	Rewind
25233	25029	THE WHITE STRIPES	The Denial Twist
24964	24726	THE DARKNESS	One way ticket...
24472	24280	KAISER CHIEFS	Modern Way
25315	24341	50 CENT	Window Shopper
24368	24362	ARCTIC MONKEYS	I Bet You Look
24474	24545	GREEN DAY	Jesus Of Suburbia
24039	24546	JAMIROQUAI	Give Hate A...
23856	23124	KANYE WEST	Gold Digger
24432	24367	PHARRELL	Can I Have It Like
25167	23334	SUGABABES	PUSH THE BUTTON
24890	20030	DANIEL POWTER	BAD DAY
22735	22728	COLDPLAY	Fix you

text: MASTER+CODE to 88066
or call: 0906 517 7600
Irish users can call 1580 718 638 or text their order to 57767

WALLPAPERS

text: MASTER+CODE to 88066
or call: 0906 517 7600
Irish users can call 1580 718 638 or text their order to 57767

GET A NEW LOOK FOR YOUR PHONE WITH A GREAT WALLPAPER!


24945
LORD OF THE DONUTS
18872
16638
DUFF MAN!! OH YEAH!
25610
25150
24041
25287
24320
PIMP
14491
F**KING GOAL REF
19856
25640
BEST 7
25582
25420
25758
11718
KILLER
25607
GANGSTER
23049
STAFFY
20044
LIVERPOOL CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2005
12441
20083
25311
YOU SUCK!
25156
23172
25154
13302
24457

SOUND FX

GET A CRAZY SOUND AS YOUR RINGTONE!

CODE		CODE	
11234	Crazy Chicken	12495	Explosion
12247	Sizzling Fart	12538	Gun Shot
13120	Blow Raspberry	15983	Wolf Whistle
14082	SouthP Fart Song	15984	Old Phone
12532	Evil Laugh	11760	Hey Big Boy

TV TONES

GET A TV TONE OR THEME TUNE AS YOUR RINGTONE!

CODE		CODE	
22697	Homer 32 Dohs	20024	LOG Papa Lazarou
22702	Homer Woohoo	22362	Chelsea Chant
22633	Darth Vader	22366	Liverpool Chant
22638	Scooby Doo	20203	Willy Wonka
22705	Tarzan Scream	19036	Lou and Andy

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ANIMATIONS

text: MASTER+CODE to 88066
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Irish users can call 1580 718 638 or text their order to 57767

WATCH SEXY BABES & FUNNY CARTOONS MOVE ON YOUR PHONE!

14809
22803
23999
25409
25410
24462
11418
25554
22955
25769
25557
22916
25771

3D CHARACTERS

GET 3D CHARACTERS ON YOUR PHONE!

14020	SPIDERMAN
23170	Bowser
23172	Pikachu
23171	Lara Croft
16031	GTA Ceejay
16036	Halo

text: MASTER+CODE to 88066
or call: 0906 517 7600
Irish users can call 1580 718 638 or text their order to 57767

MOVIES

text: MASTER+CODE to 88066
or call: 0906 517 7600
Irish users can call 1580 718 638 or text their order to 57767

CHOOSE ONE OF THESE GREAT VIDEOS TO WATCH ON YOUR MOBILE!

Family Guy!
24128
Sexy Shower
12842
Back flip!
24126
Snoopy!
23176
Jiggles!
23774
Geri v Kylie!
24130
Christina
14106
Batman!
24132
Cat Attack
17103
Punked!!
24134

Calls cost £1.50 per minute from landline phones. Calls made from Mobiles may cost more. Callers must be 16 or over. Polyphonic Tones, Movies & Wallpapers and Animations cost £4.50 charged as 3 x £1.50 reverse billed messages. Java Games charged as £6. Realtones, Sound FX & TVTones charged as £6. Girls in Uniform costs only £4.50 per week for unlimited access. Unsub: send STOP or STOP UNIFORM to 88066. You will incur stantard SMS, WAP and GPRS chrges where applicable. Please check billpayers permission before you call. Please check the website to ensure your phone is compatible.You must have a WAP enabled phone to downoad content. Please allow 24 hours for delivery in extreme cases due to network traffic. You may be contacted by TXTUK with Offers and Info. To unsubscribe call our Customer Care Line. Customer Care Numbers UK: 0871 872 1813 IRL: 01 248 9871. Address PO Box 51727, London NW1 8ZF. Thank You. (c) DRIV3R, DRIVER 3 - All rights reserved. Atari Interactive. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

CHEAT MASTER

QUALITY CHEATAGE SINCE 1993

CHECK OUT THE CHEATS BOOK FOR MORE!
YOUR MOST WANTED CHEATS

Behind his steely glare of determination to find cheats, there's a warm, gooey middle.

The games have dried up like my real Christmas tree this month but that hasn't stopped me in my quest for cheats. I've found all the extras in *Guitar Hero* so you can strut your stuff to even more tunes and I've got cheats for two of the best Xbox 360 arcade games out there – *Bejeweled 2* and *Gauntlet*. Then there's the *SOCOM 3* extras to unlock…

Bringing you the cheats today you'll need tomorrow

TIP OF THE MONTH

NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED PS2

ONE STOP SHOP MARKER
At the "Press Start" screen, press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ←, →, ↑, ↓ to unlock a special marker for the Junkman Engine part in the back room of the One Stop Shop in Career mode.

BURGER KING CHALLENGE
At the "Press Start" screen, press ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, ←, →, ←, →. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear. At the main menu, select the "Challenge Series" option. Scroll all the way to the bottom and choose #59, the Burger King Challenge. Successfully complete the challenge to be able to use all Junkman parts on cars you have in "My Cars".

CASTROL SYNTEC FORD GT
At the "Press Start" screen, press ←, →, ←, →, ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓ to unlock the Castrol Syntec Ford GT.

PORSCHE CAYMAN
At the "Press Start" screen, press L1, R1, R1, R1, →, ←, →, ↓ to unlock the Porsche Cayman.

$10,000
Have a saved game file from *Need For Speed: Underground 2* on your memory card to get an extra $10,000 in Career mode after the prologue.

BLACKLIST CARS
Defeat the indicated Blacklist Rival to win the corresponding car:

ASTON MARTIN DB9
Blacklist Rival #7

AUDI A3 3.2 QUATTRO
Blacklist Rival #15

AUDI A4 3.2 FSI QUATTRO
Blacklist Rival #14

AUDI TT 3.2 QUATTRO
Blacklist Rival #15

BMW GTR (RACE VERSION)
Blacklist Rival #1

CADILLAC CTS
Blacklist Rival #12

CORVETTE C6
Blacklist Rival #5

If you're struggling to get a decent ride, just tap in a few of these button combinations.

CORVETTE C6.R
Complete 100% of the game

DODGE VIPER SRT 10
Blacklist Rival #6

FORD GT
Blacklist Rival #4

LAMBORGHINI GALLARDO
Blacklist Rival #6

LAMBORGHINI MURCIELAGO
Blacklist Rival #4

LOTUS ELISE
Blacklist Rival #8

MAZDA RX-7
Blacklist Rival #9

MAZDA RX-8
Blacklist Rival #12

MERCEDES-BENZ CLK 500
Blacklist Rival #8

MERCEDES-BENZ SL 500
Blacklist Rival #11

MERCEDES-BENZ SLR MCLAREN
Blacklist Rival #3

MITSUBISHI ECLIPSE
Blacklist Rival #14

MITSUBISHI LANCER EVOLUTION VIII
Blacklist Rival #11

MUSTANG GT
Blacklist Rival #12

PONTIAC GTO
Blacklist Rival #10

PORSCHE 911 CARRERA S
Blacklist Rival #7

PORSCHE 911 TURBO S
Blacklist Rival #5

PORSCHE CARRERA GT
Blacklist Rival #3

SOCOM 3: US NAVY SEALS PS2

☑ NEW MODES
☑ UNLOCKABLE CHARACTERS
☑ BONUS WEAPONS

ADMIRAL MODE
Complete single-player mode on the Captain difficulty setting.

CAPTAIN MODE
Complete single-player mode on the Commander difficulty setting.

BONUS MULTI-PLAYER CHARACTERS
Complete the following areas on the indicated difficulty setting to unlock the corresponding multi-player character:

AL-KAMLI SARWAT (NORTH AFRICA TERRORIST)
Complete North Africa on any difficulty setting.

KILLJOY (NORTH AFRICA SEAL)
Complete all training missions.

SEAL JUNGLE GHILLIE SUIT (NORTH AFRICA)
Complete North Africa on the Commander, Captain, or Admiral difficulty setting

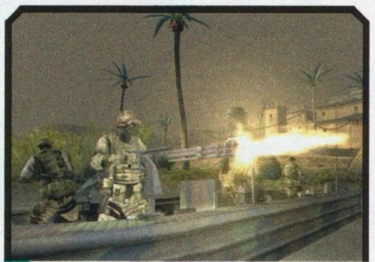
TERRORIST JUNGLE GHILLIE SUIT (NORTH AFRICA)
Complete North Africa on the Commander, Captain, or Admiral difficulty setting.

SEAL WINTER GHILLIE SUIT (POLAND)
Complete Poland on the Commander, Captain, or Admiral difficulty setting.

TERRORIST WINTER GHILLIE SUIT (POLAND)
Complete Poland on the Commander, Captain, or Admiral difficulty setting.

CHOPPER (SOUTH ASIA SEAL)
Complete South Asia on any difficulty setting.

HARI RAMAN (SOUTH ASIA TERRORIST)
Complete South Asia on the Captain or Admiral difficulty setting.



Complete certain missions in single-player missions to unlock new weapons.

SEAL DESERT GHILLIE SUIT (SOUTH ASIA)
Complete South Asia on the Commander, Captain, or Admiral difficulty setting.

TERRORIST DESERT GHILLIE SUIT (SOUTH ASIA):
Complete South Asia on the Commander, Captain, or Admiral difficulty setting.

SCARECROW CHARACTER SKIN
Complete Fireteam Bravo on the PSP on any difficulty setting and link to *SOCOM 3: U.S. Navy Seals* to unlock the COLDKILL (Poland SEAL) and Dr. Basia Mironova (Poland terrorist) characters. Accumulate at least 24 hours of online play time to unlock the Scarecrow character skin.

BONUS WEAPONS
Successfully complete single-player mode on the indicated difficulty setting to unlock extra weapons in single-player and Training modes:

IW-80 A2
Any difficulty.

STG 77
Any difficulty.

GROM WEAPONS
Captain difficulty.

SBS WEAPONS
Commander difficulty.

SEAL WEAPONS
Ensign difficulty.

TERRORIST WEAPONS
Lieutenant difficulty.

BONUS ITEMS
Successfully complete single-player mode on the indicated difficulty setting to unlock the corresponding item:

FRONT GRIP
Captain difficulty.

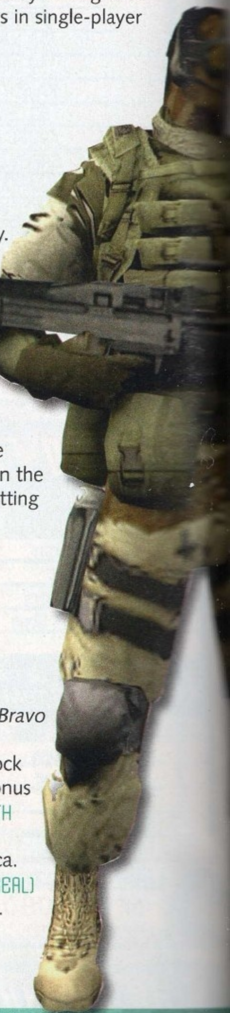
MEDIUM SCOPE
Captain difficulty.

CONNECTION BONUSES
Link to a PSP with *SOCOM 3 Fireteam Bravo* and complete the indicated task to unlock the corresponding bonus

AL-KAMIL SARWAT (NORTH AFRICA TERRORIST)
Complete North Africa.

CHOPPER (SOUTH ASIA SEAL)
Complete South Asia.

DR. BASIA MIRONOVA (POLAND TERRORIST)
Complete Poland.



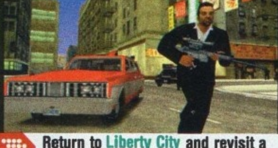
YOUR TOP 10 TIPS

Share your top tips with us, best one wins a game!

1. GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES

PSP

Smiley face:
On Staunton Island there is a parking lot on the top northeast corner. Look for a white staircase in between the parking garage and the parking lot entrances on the south side. Go up the staircase and jump on the short cement railing. Then turn east and jump up on the roof overlooking the parking lot (Liberty City Tree Building) and run across the roof to the other side where you will see a courtyard. Jump down into the courtyard and run to the very end of the courtyard to the northwest. Then on a wall at the end of a courtyard has a white picture of a smiley face and says 'Hello Again'. This is the same spot where in *Grand Theft Auto 3*, where a sign says "You aren't supposed to be here."
Patrick James McGowan, Co. Durham



Return to Liberty City and revisit a few old haunts, just for fun.

2. 50 CENT: BULLETPROOF

Extra money
Grab your opponent and interrogate him until he drops a credit card or his wallet. Then, execute him and choose to steal. He will either give you a credit card or wallet, depending on what you got the first time. Normally when you kill an enemy and steal from them, you will only get either a wallet or a credit card, and not both. Additionally, get a close range head shot to get $5,000 or more in credit cards or money, jewellery, and armour depending whether you need it or not.
Jake Wells, via email

GREATEST CHEATS EVER!

MAKE AUTOMATIC FATALITIES WITHOUT PRESSING A BUTTON

MORTAL KOMBAT 4 (N64)

PUBLISHER: MIDWAY
YEAR OF RELEASE 1997

Most of the fun of *Mortal Kombat* was the fatalities, which involved ripping a man's spine out or beating him to death with his own leg. But they were a bugger to pull off, as they involved memorising a stream of button pushes for each character and fatality.
This cheat let you do them automatically. Just enter it then hold ↓ and press high punch to see every one in all their gory, sorry glory.

At the options screen, highlight the 'continues' option. Hold block and run for about 10 seconds and you'll hear the word 'outstanding' spoken. The cheat menu appears and you can enable automatic fatalities.

Look! Lovely blue skies in a *Mortal Kombat* game. Oh, how times have changed.

FRONT GRIP
Complete South Asia.
IW-80 A2
Complete Poland.
MEDIUM SCOPE
Complete South Asia.
STG-77
Complete Poland.

GUITAR HERO PS2

☑ NEW GUITARS
☑ CHEAT MODE
☑ CHANGE THE AUDIENCE

CHEAT MODE

At the main menu, quickly press Yellow, Orange, Blue, Blue, Orange, Yellow, Yellow to unlock all bonuses. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear. Note: The game cannot be saved after this code is enabled.

GUITARIST USES AIR GUITAR
At the main menu, quickly press Orange, Orange, Blue, Yellow, Orange. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear.

GUITARIST USES GUITAR HERO SG
At the main menu, quickly press Blue, Orange, Yellow, Blue, Blue. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear.

MONKEY AUDIENCE
At the main menu, quickly press Blue, Orange, Yellow, Yellow, Yellow, Blue, Orange. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear.

SKULL AUDIENCE
At the main menu, quickly press Orange, Yellow, Blue, Blue, Orange, Yellow, Blue, Blue. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear.

TOGGLE NO VENUES
At the main menu, quickly press Blue, Yellow, Orange, Blue, Yellow, Orange. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear. Only the band and crowd will be visible, with no background.

BATTLE AXE
Complete Career mode on the Expert difficulty setting to unlock the Battle Axe.

SONGS

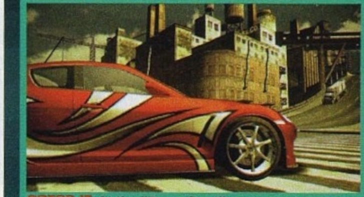
Spend the indicated amount of money at the Song Shop to unlock the corresponding song:

We like the green, green is our friend. The orange note however, is bad.

TOP 20 CHEATS

Oh cheaty cheats how we adore thee! Check out our updated UK Top 20...

01 NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED PS2 XBOX CUBE PC



ENTER IT: At the "Press Start" screen, press ←, →, →, →, →, ←, →, ↓
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks the Porsche Cayman.

02 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5 PS2 XBOX PC

DO IT: Start an international league and select only two teams to enter the league. You will only have to play two games to earn match winning points and 1,500 PES points each time you win the league. **WHAT IT DOES:** Easy peasy PES points.

03 FIFA 06 PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

DO IT Edit player stats so they all read 99. However, if you play as that team in Manager mode, remember to cut contracts down because otherwise their salaries will be massive.
WHAT IT DOES: Makes your boys virtually unbeatable.

04 HARRY POTTER & GOBLET OF FIRE PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

DO IT: Use the Wingardium Leviosa spell to transport the big block you find on the second level of the Forbidden Forest everywhere with you on the stage.
WHAT IT DOES: Levels Wingardium Leviosa spell to maximum strength quickly.

05 50 CENT: BULLETPROOF PS2 XBOX

ENTER IT: Pause the game, select "Options" then choose "Cheats". Enter "ny'sfinestyo" as a code
WHAT IT DOES: Makes you invincible.

06 CALL OF DUTY 2: BIG RED ONE PS2 XBOX CUBE

DO IT: Keep moving forward to cover when you are not under fire.
WHAT IT DOES: If you don't, enemies will sometimes just keep on coming.

07 STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT 2 PS2 XBOX PC

ENTER IT: Pause the game in Story, Instant Action, or Galactic Conquest mode and press ↑, ↑, ↑, ←, ↓, ↓, ↓, ←, ↑, ↑, ↑, ←, →.
WHAT IT DOES: Invincibility.

08 KING KONG: OFFICIAL GAME OF THE MOVIE PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

ENTER IT: At the main menu, hold L1 + R1 and press ↓, ◎, ↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↑, ↑. Release L1 + R1 and a "Cheat" option will appear at the main menu. Select it then enter "KKst0ry" as a code. XBOX As above but press ↓, Ⓧ, ↑, Ⓑ, ↓, ↓, ↑, ↑ CUBE ↓, Ⓑ, ↑, Ⓧ, ↓, ↓, ↑, ↑
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks level select.

09 GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES PSP

ENTER IT: While playing a game, press ↑, ↑, ↑, △, △, ◎, L, R.
WHAT IT DOES: All multi-player locales unlocked.

12 WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2006 PS2

DO IT: Complete the Superstar challenges.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks the Legend Steel Cage

13 CALL OF DUTY 2 PC

ENTER IT: Press ~ to display the console window, then enter 'developer 1' as a command to enable cheat mode. The 'Load' button will now appear.
WHAT IT DOES: Mission Select.

12 PERFECT DARK ZERO PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT: Successfully complete the game on Perfect Agent mode.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks Dark Agent mode.

13 THE SIMS 2 PS2 XBOX CUBE

ENTER IT: : PS2 While playing a game, press L1, R1, ↑, ⊗, R2. XBOX As above but press L, R, ↑, Ⓐ, ● CUBE As above but press L, R, ↑, Ⓐ, Z **WHAT IT DOES:** Enables Cheat Gnome.

14 NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH & WARDROBE PS2

ENTER IT: At the Wardrobe level selection screen, hold L and press ↑, ↑, →, →, ↑, →, ↓. If you entered the code correctly, the message "Cheat Activated" will appear.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks level select.

15 GUN PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

DO IT: In Texas Hold 'em raise your bid to max. Cheat to make your hand better, and if the cheat card is a worse card, go back to your original hand.
WHAT IT DOES: Loads of easy money.

16 PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 3 360

DO IT: Go to view cars, then choose to walk around in your garage. Go in the back and you will see two games set up to play, called *Geometry Wars 1 and 2.*
WHAT IT DOES: Lets you play Bizarre Creation's *Geometry Wars 1 and 2* mini-games

17 TRUE CRIME: NEW YORK CITY PS2 XBOX

ENTER IT: PS2 At the CompStat/Map screen, hold L1 + R1 and press ◎, ⊡, ⊗, ⊡, Square, △ XBOX As above but hold L + R and press Ⓑ, Ⓧ, Ⓐ, Ⓧ, Ⓧ, Ⓨ
WHAT IT DOES: Infinite ammunition.

18 SHADOW THE HEDGEHOG PS2 XBOX CUBE

DO IT: Get an "A" rank in all stages
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks Expert mode

19 FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE PS2 XBOX CUBE

DO IT: In the second level, complete the maze and you will be in Moneypenny's office. Before you go to M's room, search the drawer.
WHAT IT DOES: Gets you the formal dinner suit.

20 CRASH TAG TEAM RACING PS2 XBOX CUBE

DO IT: Give Crunch Bandicoot 2,500 Coins at Midway.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks Crunch.

3. TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2006 PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

More money and items

While playing in Rivals mode, save your profile every time you exit to the main menu. Sometimes you will get offered a sponsorship when you have done something great, such as defeating Tiger in one of his challenges. If it is early in the game and EA Sports, Nike, Nike TW Collection, Adidas, or Under Armour offer you a sponsorship, decline it. Then, reload your profile, go into Rivals mode again and do not save your profile. Exit to the main menu again. Most of the time you will be offered a different sponsorship. Do this so you can get the aforementioned sponsorships later in the game to have many more items to choose from, with larger payouts. If you take a Precept, TaylorMade, Bridgestone, etc. sponsorship early, you will get small payouts, but only on a few items.

Paul Howard, Bridgend

Earn lucrative sponsorship deals to make money for just wearing stuff.

4. CRASH TAG TEAM RACING PS2

Explode impact in a race
⊗, ◎, ◎, ⊗
Make Crash have a big head
⊡, ◎, ⊡, ◎
Change all the cars in multi-player mode to red brick cars
◎, ◎, △, ⊡
Go faster in a race
◎, ◎, △, △

Shane Murphy, via email

5. WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2006 PS2

Complete Season mode on both Smackdown and on Raw and you will receive unlimited Experience points for your created wrestler. To win Buried Alive matches without going through the 'pushing them in' bit and then 'closing the lid', build up your momentum to gain finisher, store this and then rebuild your

ACRO-BRATS (CALL OUT):
$250
ANARCHY CLUB (BEHIND THE MASK):
$250
ARTILLERY ("THE BREAKING WHEEL"):
$250
BLACK LABEL SOCIETY(W/ ZAKK WYLDE) (FIRE IT UP):
$300
COUNT ZERO (SAIL YOUR SHIP BY):
$250
DIN (FLY ON THE WALL):
$250
DRIST (DECONTROL):
$250
FREEZEPOP (GET READY 2 ROKK):
$250
GRAVEYARD BBQ (CHEAT ON THE CHURCH):
$300
HONEST BOB AND THE FACTORY-TO-DEALER INCENTIVES (HEY):
$250
MADE IN MEXICO (FAREWELL MYTH):
$250
MONKEY STEAL THE PEACH (GUITAR HERO THEME):
$250
SHAIMUS (ALL OF THIS):
$250
THE BAGS (CAVEMAN REJOICE):
$300
THE MODEL SONS (THE STORY OF MY LOVE):
$250
THE SLIP (EVEN RATS):
$250
UPPER CRUST (EUREKA, I'VE FOUND LOVE):
$300

GUITARS

Spend the indicated amount of money at the Guitar Shop to unlock the corresponding instrument:

GIBSON CORVUS:
$700
GIBSON EDS-1275 DOUBLENECK:
$850
GIBSON ES-335:
$600
GIBSON EXPLORER:
$600
GIBSON FIREBIRD:
$600
GIBSON LES PAUL SPECIAL:
$600

You'll have to pleck like Hendrix to earn enough cash to buy every single guitar and track.

Spoiler!

Get a mirror to decipher this devilishy clever spoiler.

PHOENIX WRIGHT: ACE ATTORNEY (DS)

Both Acts Four and Five of Phoenix Wright are real emotional rollercoasters, with all manner of unexpected twists and turns. At the end of Act Four it is revealed that famed prosecutor Manfred Von Karma is actually the murderer and is trying to frame poor prosecutor Miles Edgeworth for the murder, while at the climax of the fifth turnabout we discover to our horror that the heroic Chief of Police Gant is actually the culprit! Dark days indeed for the law establishment – and thank heaven for good old Phoenix!

GIBSON MODERNE:
$700

GUITAR SKINS

Spend the indicated amount of money at the Skin Shop to unlock the corresponding guitar skin:

APLINE WHITE GIBSON EDS-1275:
$150
BIRDSEYE MAPLE GIBSON ES-335:
$200
BLUE GIBSON FIREBIRD:
$150
CHERRY GIBSON LES PAUL SPECIAL:
$200
COOPER GIBSON FIREBIRD:
$200
CRACKED BLUE GIBSON FLYING V:
$250
CUSTOM CHERRY GIBSON ES-335:
$250
CUSTOM DRAGON GIBSON MODERNE:
$250
CUSTOM FLAME GIBSON SG:
$250
CUSTOM RISING SUN GIBSON EXPLORER:
$250
CUSTOM SNAKESKIN GIBSON CORVUS:
$250
EBONY GIBSON ES-335:
$150
EBONY GIBSON LES PAUL STANDARD:
$150
EBONY GIBSON MODERNE:
$200
EBONY GIBSON SG:
$150
GIBSON MORDERNE RED:
$150
GOLDTOP GIBSON LES PAUL STANDARD:
$200
GREEN LIGHTING GIBSON LES PAUL SPECIAL:
$250
NATURAL GIBSON CORVUS:
$200
NATURAL GIBSON EXPLORER:
$200
NATURAL GIBSON FLYING V2:
$200
PSYCHODELIC GIBSON FIREBIRD:
$250
WHITE GIBSON CORVUS WHITE:
$150
WHITE GIBSON EXPLORER:
$150
WHITE GIBSON LES PAUL SPECIAL:
$150
WORN CHERRY GIBSON FLYING V:
$150
WORN WHITE GIBSON SG:
$200
ZAKK WYLDE GIBSON LES PAUL CUSTOM:
$250

HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE PSP

☑ MAGICAL MINI-GAMES!

UNLOCKABLE MINI-GAMES

DUGBOG BULB RAID MINI-GAME
Collect five Tri-Wizard Shields.
EXPLODING SNAP MINI-GAME
Collect two Tri-Wizard Shields.
NIFFLER TIME CHALLENGE MINI-GAME
Collect eight Tri-Wizard Shields.
WIZARD PAIRS MINI-GAME
Complete level 1.

Harry and friends ignore the age old rule of never crossing the streams! The fools!

THE HARDEST GAMES IN THE WORLD

TUROK:

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
YEAR OF RELEASE 2002

If you've ever tried to write a full walkthrough for a cover-mounted cheats book (probably not, but you never know) you'll fully appreciate how god-awful this game is to complete. If we'd had this invincibility code at the time, we probably wouldn't suffer now from the occasional facial spasm when stressed.

Invincibility
Enter "EMERPUS" as a code at the

TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN SK8LAND DS

LEGACY CAMERA AND CREDITS
Successfully complete Story mode to unlock the legacy camera and credits. The legacy camera makes the camera view similar to the GBA versions of the Tony Hawk games.
CREATE-A-SKATER
Successfully complete Classic mode with any character.
INFINITE RAIL, MANUAL, AND LIP BALANCE
Successfully complete Classic mode with two different characters.
TINY MODE
Successfully complete Classic mode with three different characters .
GIANT MODE
Successfully complete Classic mode with four different characters.
MATRIX MODE
Successfully complete Classic mode with five different characters.

SCORE 2666
SPINE TRANSFER
500

Why play the game with this really good view, unlock the naff GBA one in Legacy mode!

YOUR TOP 10 TIPS

momentum. Once you have a stored finisher and full momentum, whip your opponent towards the casket and then press L1. There's an instant winner for Parking Lot brawls as well. You must have a stored finisher and full momentum. Take your opponent to the back of JBL's limo, the rear door, and get into a grapple then just press ◎. You will put your opponent into the limo. Go to the blue truck and ram it into the limo for an instant KO.

SSJGoku, via email

6. GTA: VICE CITY PS2

XBOX PC

To get infinite handgun ammo, go to the shooting range in Ammu-Nation, start up a shooting level and keep on doing the missions for 15+ turns. Eventually when you come out you should have infinite bullets. You can tell this as there will be no number telling you how much ammo you have.

Scott Morey, Portsmouth

7. X-MEN LEGENDS II: RISE OF APOCALYPSE

Team Configurations

By organizing your team into certain groups you can gain certain in game bonuses. So Scarlet Witch, Toad, Juggernaut, and Magneto as a Brotherhood of Evil group adds 5% to your earned EXP.

Jacob, Worksop

8. STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT 2 PS2

Infinite health

Pause the game and press ↑, ↑, ↑, ←, ↓, ↓, ↓, ←, ↑, ↑, ↑, ←, →

Ryan Radford, Mid Glamorgan

9. NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED

Getting the most money when

Keep on kicking Jedi ass even when engulfed in flames

Galaxy One
WARP TO PLANET
Toroid X
CLOSE MAP
Toroid X - 1
This world has a Checkerboard theme.
Solve 4 of the 5 puzzles to go to the next world.

Bejewelled is one of the better games that can be downloaded to your 360.

FIRST PERSON CAMERA
Successfully complete Classic mode with six different characters.

REPLAY CAM
Successfully complete Classic mode with seven different characters.

TURBO MODE
Successfully complete Classic mode with eight different characters.

ALWAYS SPECIAL
Successfully complete Classic mode with nine different characters.

PAPER TONY
Successfully complete Classic mode with ten different characters.

HOVERBOARD
Successfully complete Classic mode with eleven different characters.

NEARLY ALWAYS RIBBON
Successfully complete Classic mode with twelve different characters.

NINJA SKATER
Successfully complete Classic mode with all thirteen characters.

BEJEWELED 2 360

☑ **ALL MODES UNLOCKED**

COGNITO MODE
Complete all 80 Puzzle mode worlds.

FINITY MODE
Complete 280 levels of Endless mode.

HYPER MODE
Complete 8 levels in Action mode.

TWILIGHT MODE
Complete 17 levels in Classic mode.

GAUNTLET 360

☑ **EXIT EVERYWHERE!**

TURN WALLS INTO EXITS
Have all characters remain completely idle for approximately two minutes and all the walls will turn into exits.

SAVE THE WIZARD
On co-op let the wizard have all the health and all the potions, therefore you'll always be able to deal with Death whenever he appears.

GAUNTLET
LEVEL 1
WARRIOR
SCORE HEALTH
VALKYRIE
SCORE HEALTH
WIZARD
SCORE HEALTH
ELF
SCORE HEALTH
370 610

That's what you want for your next-gen console, a 20-year-old arcade game.

WE WANT YOUR TIPS!

We want your best tips and secrets for any game. Make sure they're cool things you've discovered and email them to gamesmastertips@futurenet.co.uk or by post to My Top Ten Tips, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. The best tip every month gets a free game.

CONSOLETATION ZONE

GM – coming to the aid of stuck gamers since 1993!

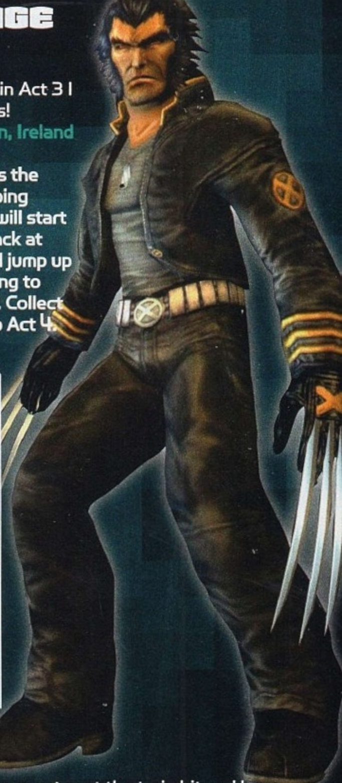
X2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

Dear *GamesMaster*,
Please help me! In *X2: Wolverine's Revenge* for my PC in Act 3 I can't beat Sabertooth and I've been stuck on it for ages!

Nathan Ryan, Ireland

This battle is in three parts. The first part is the same as the first time you faced him. Throw him into the truck by going behind him and pressing Strike. After this, Sabretooth will start grabbing barrels and throwing them at you. Hit them back at him. Do this five times and he'll enter his final part. He'll jump up and there will be a green cross to show where he is going to land. Get on the cross and press Strike to finish him off. Collect Sabretooth's Dog tags and Cerebro file. Then you go to Act 4.



He's a big lad, Sabretooth, but he has a real problem with mutants smacking barrels back at him. The wimp.

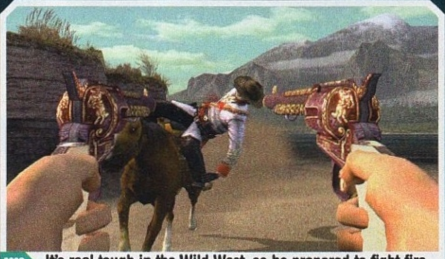
GUN

PS2 XBOX CUBE PC

Dear *GM*,
I'm having problems completing the final level in *Gun!* I can get past the train bit and have killed Magruder's men but Magruder himself just kills me no matter how many bullets I put in him. How do I get past him?

Mike Matthews, via email

First off Magruder will run around shooting at you and throwing dynamite. At this point, use your dynamite bow from a distance. When Magruder walks over one of the blue/green things on the floor, shoot it with a dynamite arrow to make it explode. Do this enough times and Magruder will move onto a platform. Get out your sniper and aim at his head. Get in a head-shot and he'll throw a wad of dynamite at you. Shoot the dynamite when it's in mid-air several times. The explosion should crush him beneath a big rock. If you run out of ammo, move closer and use quick-draw to aim at his head. Keep repeating this and don't move too far away from him or his henchmen will come along and try to take you down.



It's real tough in the Wild West, so be prepared to fight fire with fire, and dynamite with dynamite attached to an arrow.

GOT A PROBLEM? STUCK IN A GAME?
WE CAN HELP! EMAIL IT TO US AT GAMESMASTERTIPS@FUTURENET.CO.UK, SUBJECT CONSOLETATION OR WRITE TO CONSOLETATION ZONE, GAMESMASTER, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH. BA1 2BW. IF WE CAN'T HELP - YOU'VE HAD IT!

selling your car
There is a trick that works well for Pinkslips that you have won and no longer want. Take your car to the shop, then go to the parts area. Go into the body kit, spoiler, hood, rims, and roof air areas and set everything to stock. When you check out, you will see anywhere from $1,000 to $18,000, depending on what Pinkslip car you are stripping. The shop will charge you money for downgrading. Once you have stripped your car of all accessories, leave and go to your safe house. Sell the car, and you will have made a lot of money on the side. Do this every time you intend to sell any car.

Paul Edwards, via email

10. THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA:

Defeating the White Witch
Run until she does a back-flip. Above her head a circle will read "5+". Hit her five times, then a bow and arrow will appear. As Susan, shoot her with it. Use Edmund to hit her. She will call giant ogres to attack you. Kill them with the barrels. Repeat, then set the barrels on fire and hit her with them. Repeat the first process, repeat again, then Susan can blow the Ivory Horn to summon Aslan, the king of Narnia. After that, the level will be completed.

Alex Evans, via email

GM'S TOP 5 MOST WANTED TIPS

01: PERFECT DARK ZERO

We've given you some top online tips in this issue's guide but have you found any tactics or glitches that we haven't? Let us know.

02: 50 CENT: BULLETPROOF

Unlocked any extras? Found any secrets? Discovered a way of making this god-awful game any better? Write in...

03: PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE TWO THRONES

There are usually some secrets to be found in *Prince of Persia*. Have you uncovered anything off the beaten track?

04: TRUE CRIME: NEW YORK CITY

It's a massive game with plenty to see and do – let us know what you've found.

TIPSTER
Joel Snape

TIME TO COMPLETE
You should have the 50cc GPs done in two hours – the 150cc option's going to take you another five or so...

BEST BIT
Hitting both shortcuts in Sky Garden to chop an easy five seconds off your best lap time. Get your ghost up online.

HARDEST BIT
Beating Rainbow Road as every computer character gangs up on you in 150cc. Being liberal with the bananas and a complete lack of morals are the key here.

WHERE ARE YOU STUCK?

THE COMPUTER KEEPS PICKING ON ME! I'VE FOUND WHAT LOOKS LIKE A SHORTCUT, BUT CAN'T MAKE THE JUMP!
You might need to be racing in a faster category, or use a mushroom. Flick to our track guide to find out.

I'M GETTING A KICKING ONLINE!
Start getting 'creative' with your banana laying. See the last page of the guide to find out how.

KNOW HOW TO...

Win every race and nail every shortcut in *Mario Kart*...

MARIO KART DS

Mario Kart has never been fairer – or harder. With Ninty's classic providing the first real reason to get your DS up and online, Wario's the least of your worries – now you're exposed to a whole world of Time Attack ghosts and players who can nail you with a green shell ricochet at 50 yards.

With that in mind, we've created a guide that tells you everything you need ever know about the wonderful world of *Mario Kart DS*. Whether you're a rank beginner who's never pulled a powerslide, or a seasoned pro who needs to up his game for the big leagues, you should find something to help you here…

THE WEAPONS

What they are, and how to use them...

Bananas – almost useless as a weapon, but good on defence.

Try to get direct hits with Bob-Ombs, or they'll probably kill you.

Play Baby Circuit a few times to get to grips with snaking.

BANANA

In tight races, hold L to 'trail' the banana behind you to shield you from red and green shells. Or try to drop it on boost pads or tight corners, or directly behind you if you're being tailed. Also comes in Triple Banana flavour.

GREEN SHELL

These can be 'trailed' as a shield, which frees your item box up to collect something else. Firing them takes a bit of skill unless you're really close. They can be fired backwards, too. The 'Triple Shells' also work as a shield.

FAKE ITEM BOX

Online they're handy for tricking people – drop them about half a second before you drive through a *real* item box so they look just like the real thing.

MUSHROOM

These speed you up – handy for two reasons: a 'shrooming player will knock adversaries out of the way, and certain tracks have shortcuts that can only be accessed using the extra burst of speed they provide.

BLOOPER

New for DS, this annoying squid really slows down computer players and obscures the view of human players. If you've been hit and can't see, use the dual-screen map to take tricky corners.

RED SHELL

The red shell won't always take the quickest route to your target. Instead, they'll usually strike them from the side to avoid any item they might be carrying behind them. If a red shell is trailing you, use a green shell, banana, or another red shell to get rid of it.

BOO

Boo no longer slows down your opponent – instead, he nicks a random target's item, so use the Boo whenever you see an item you want. Another benefit to Boo is that you become translucent upon using it, so you can pass right through other drivers and obstacles.

BOB-OMB

These launch any car they hit into the air. If they hit a car directly they'll go off straight way – otherwise they'll bounce for a couple of seconds first.

SPIKED SHELL

The uber-shell. This'll zero in on the player in first position and blow them into the air – it's almost impossible to avoid.

GOLDEN MUSHROOM

This is the supreme Mushroom. It's basically a mushroom that you can use an infinite amount of times for about 10 seconds.

LIGHTNING BOLT

Lightning has an interesting effect in *Mario Kart* DS – instead of affecting all other players for an equal amount of time, it's relative to their position in the race. Seventh place recovers fairly quickly, and first place spins out, then stays tiny for ten seconds.

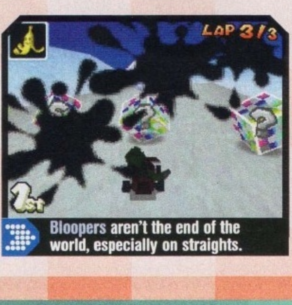
BULLET BILL

Remember the Chain Chomp special item from *Double Dash*? This is like that, only better. On using a Bullet Bill, you will gain a massive amount of speed, turn into a Bullet Bill, and follow the track automatically.

STAR

Stars rule. They grant you complete invincibility and offensive control. Any poor soul to get in your path will be knocked away from you as if they were hit by a fake item box. Sadly, you only get them when you're at the back of the pack.

If in doubt and the race is tight, don't bother – you might scuff it.



Bloopers aren't the end of the world, especially on straights.

BASIC TACTICS

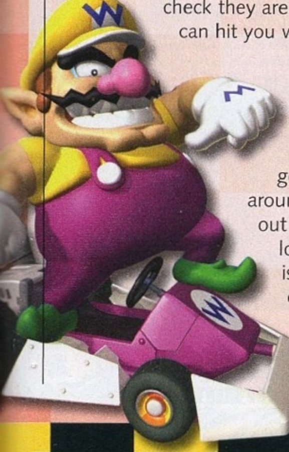
Don't know these? You shouldn't be on the track.

ROCKET START

A *Mario Kart* favourite, altered slightly for this version. You need to hold Ⓐ just as the '2' from the countdown starts to fade out – your wheels should start to spin and you'll be off the starting line with a hefty chunk of boost.

DRAFTING

Or 'slip-streaming', as it's known in other games. Follow another racer for three or four seconds – you can tell you're doing it, because you'll see white air lines appear – and you'll get a short burst of speed equivalent to using a Star for three seconds. It's best to glance at the map/inventory screen and check they aren't carrying anything they can hit you with first, though.



POWERSLIDING

The basic way of getting around corners. Hit R and steer hard just before you get to a corner and you'll drift around it, letting you accelerate out of the turn without any real loss of speed. This manoeuvre is fine for anything up to a 90 degree angle.

CHOOSE YOUR VEHICLE

Each character starts with two vehicular options – a standard racer and their own souped-up custom drive. Generally speaking, it's best to pick the ones that play to your strengths – and bear in mind that the 'item' ability can be a double-edged sword in a fight.

LIGHT

Toad and Daisy are part of this category – they're nippy and handle well, with good acceleration but poor top speed. Best used on the courses that demand manouverability, by players who've master the skill of using mini-boosts.

MEDIUM

This is the Mario Brothers – reasonable in all aspects of the game and decent at regaining speed after a crash. Often the best vehicle for races, though in Time Trials you can affort to tweak your ride because you don't need to worry about the opposition.

HEAVY

Bowser and Donkey Kong fit into this group – they've got good drifting, good top speed and can clout everyone out of the way, but they're hopeless on rough terrain and difficult to handle. Best used on courses with big, flat, jostle-heavy sections.

ADVANCED TACTICS

Ready to raise your game? Here's what you ought to be doing.

MINI-BOOSTING

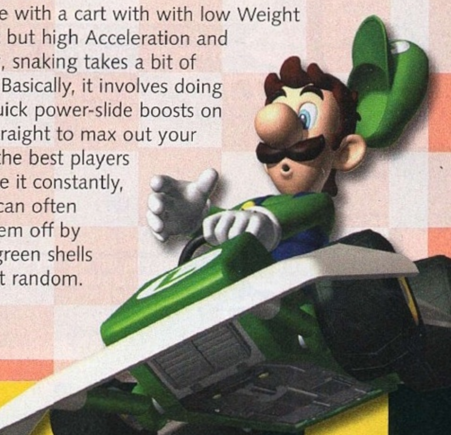
Crucial for taking hairpin bends and improving your time in Trials, rhythm's the key to getting this right. Waggle the D-pad at a regular pace as you steer into a bend, then release R to accelerate when you see your boosters turn red to accelerate out of a corner.

BUNNY HOPPING

When you hit R to powerslide, your cart hops slightly - you can use this to bounce over a chunk of grass on tight corners or take bigger shortcuts. It's also possible to repeatedly tap R to take hairpins.

SNAKING

Best done with a cart with with low Weight and Drift but high Acceleration and Handling, snaking takes a bit of practice. Basically, it involves doing lots of quick power-slide boosts on a wide straight to max out your speed – the best players online use it constantly, but you can often throw them off by pinging green shells around at random.

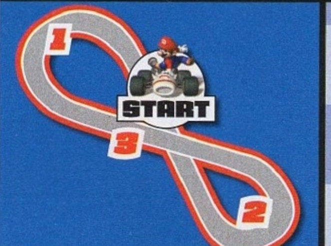


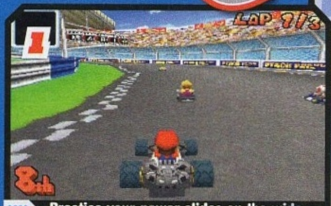
THE TRACKS

Where to drift, where to use mushrooms – and where to fling those bananas...

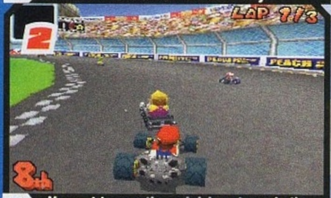
MUSHROOM CUP

FIGURE 8 CIRCUIT

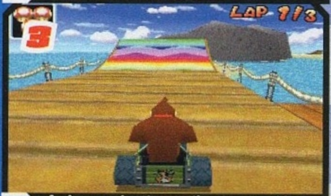




Practice your power slides on the wide corners – remember to turn early.

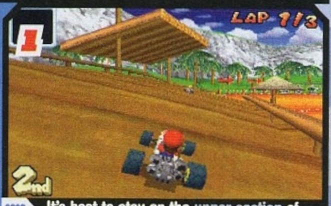


You get to practice mini-boosts on both sides – work on it for later.

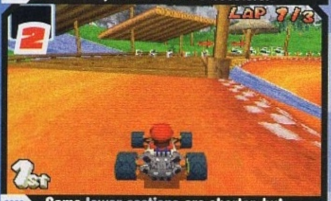


And remember to practice your snaking technique on the wide straights.

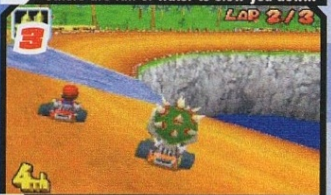
YOSHI FALLS



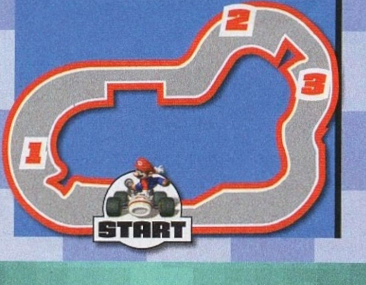
It's best to stay on the upper section of the track, because of the boosters.



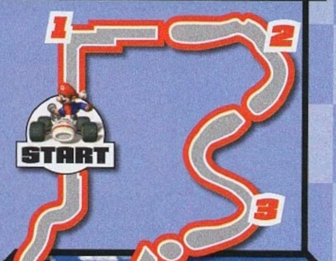
Some lower sections are shorter, but others are full of water to slow you down.

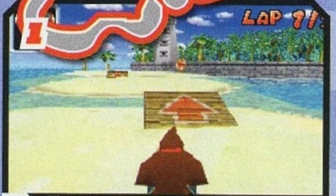


Practice big powerslide boosts on both of the big turns at the end of the circuit.

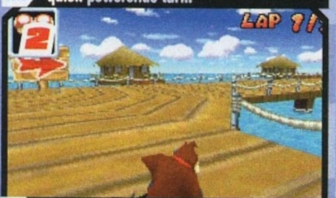


BEACH CIRCUIT

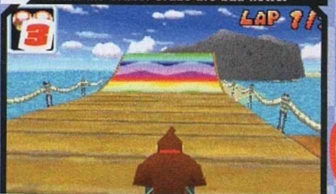




The first turn on the pier is excellent for a quick powerslide turn.

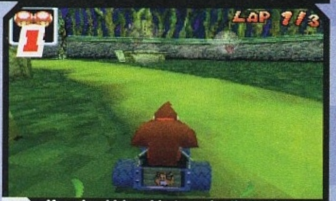


After the boost jumps, steer quickly to avoid the crabs. Crabs are bad news.

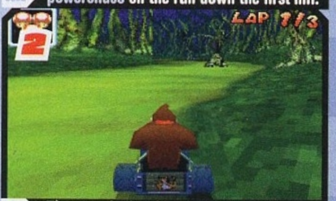


The tide on the beach goes out, so there's a shortcut if the timing's right.

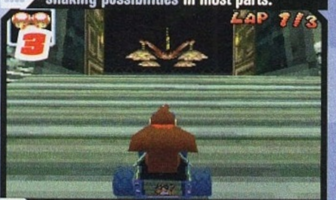
LUIGI'S MANSION



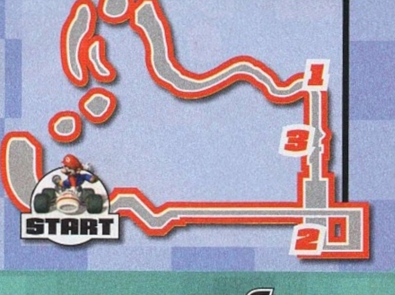
You should be able to make three sharp powerslides on the run down the first hill.



The mansion's wide enough for easy snaking possibilities in most parts.



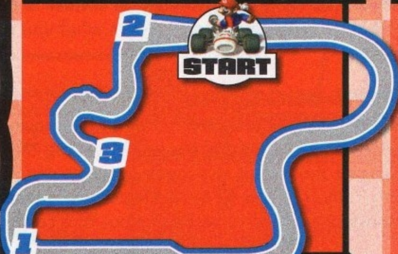
To keep your speed up in the red swamp, use mushrooms or powerslides.

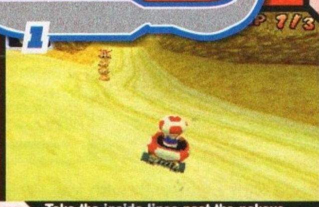


☑ EVERY TRACK ☑ EVERY WEAPON ☑ EVERY SECRET CHARACTER.

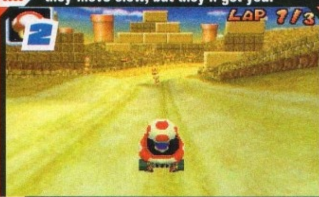
FLOWER CUP

DESERT HILLS

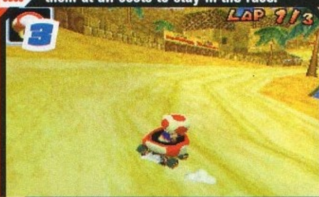




Take the inside lines past the pokeys – they move slow, but they'll get you.



Fireballs are your worst enemy – dodge them at all costs to stay in the race.

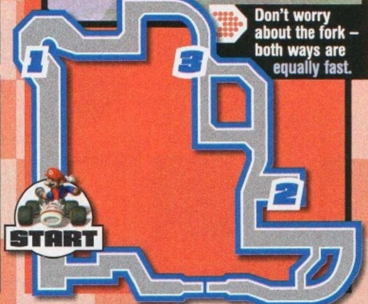


The tight turns are the perfect spot for easy boost powerslides.

DELFINO SQUARE

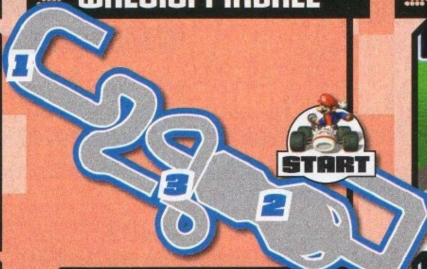
Power slide around the fountain to make the tight turn easier on yourself.

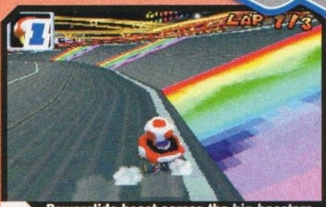
If you've got a mushroom, take this jump to land on the pier and save time.



Don't worry about the fork – both ways are equally fast.

WALUIGI PINBALL





Powerslide boost across the big boosters to get up to top speed.

Head straight down the centre of the bumper section – have no fear.

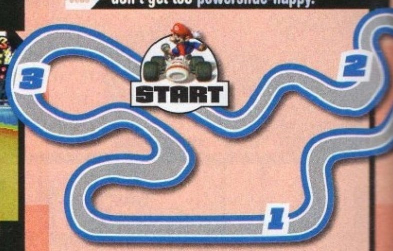
Use the map to check the position of all the pinballs and flippers.

SHROOM RIDGE

Nudge other racers into traffic to make things easier on yourself.

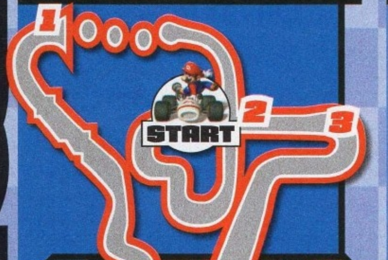
Use the map to check for buses when you take this U-bend to avoid collisions.

The last two turns don't have barriers, so don't get too powerslide-happy.



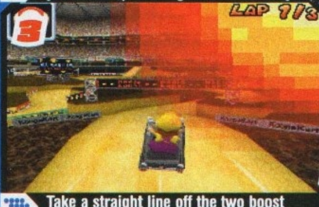
SPECIAL CUP

WARIO STADIUM



The first three turns are very light, so there's no need to powerslide.

Weave to hit all three mini-boosts here or you'll end up slowing down massively.

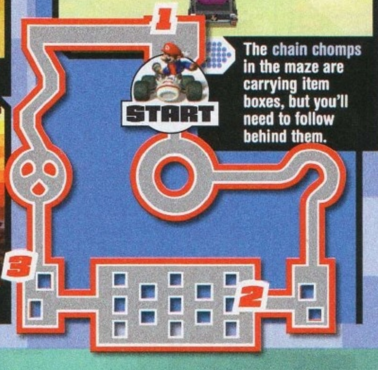


Take a straight line off the two boost jumps – otherwise you'll hit fireballs.

PEACH GARDENS

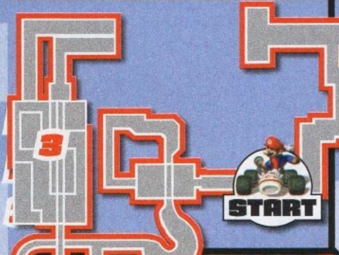
Pick a light cart – hitting bushes won't slow you down as you take shortcuts.

Use a mushroom to cut through the bushes – it saves loads of time.



The chain chomps in the maze are carrying item boxes, but you'll need to follow behind them.

BOWSER'S CASTLE



1
LAP 2/3
LAP 2

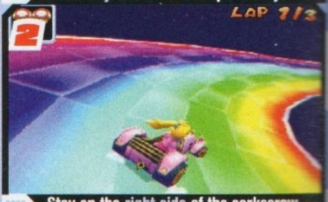
When you hit the turntable, stay on the inside and head to the far right.

It's best to have a heavy character to avoid being knocked off this narrow path.

Hit the spinning cylinder at an angle, and you won't need to steer as you cross it.

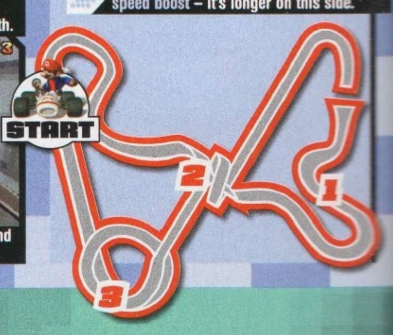
RAINBOW ROAD

You can snake down this S-curve, but it's incredibly narrow – for experts only.



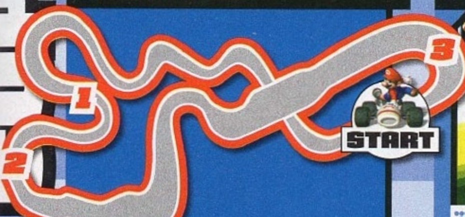
Stay on the right side of the corkscrew – it'll mean you go slightly faster.

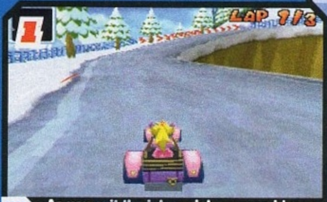
Stay left as you approach the slanted speed boost – it's longer on this side.



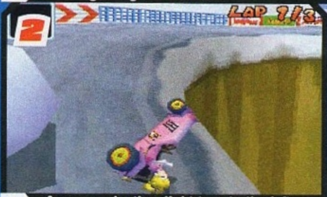
STAR CUP

DK PASS

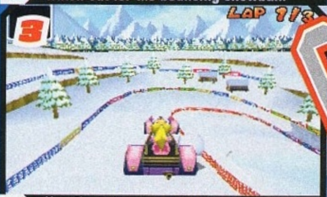




As you exit the igloo, pick up speed by snaking along the S-curve.

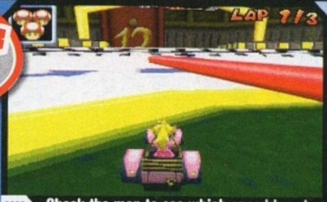


As you make the slight turn to the left, watch out for the bouncing snowball.

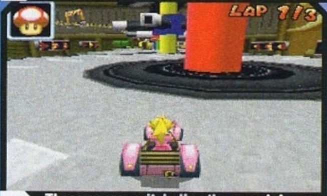


Hug the last curve tight to avoid the barrage of snowmen on the bend.

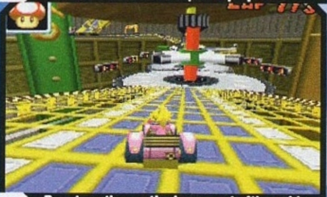
TICK TOCK CLOCK



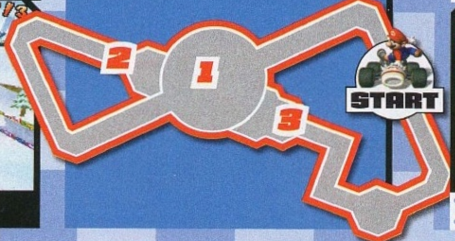
Check the map to see which speed boost to hit – it's on the side with the hour hand.



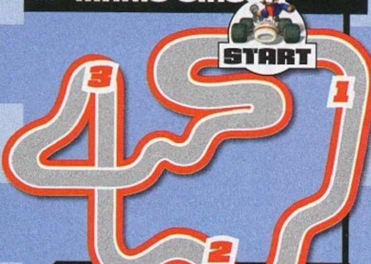
These gears switch directions each lap – snake across them to pick up speed.

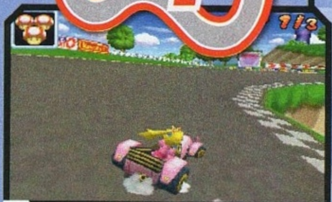


Boost up the vertical gears at either side near the end of the track for a big boost.

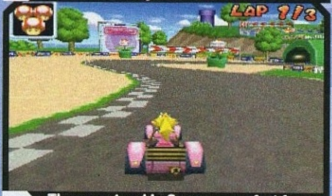


MARIO CIRCUIT

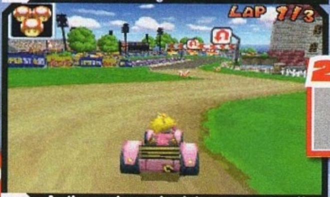




Try to nudge the opposition into the Goombahs early on in the race.

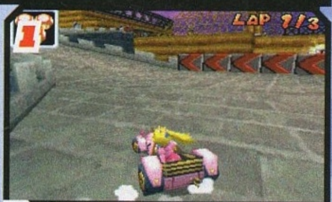


There are two big S-curves, perfect for advanced snaking.

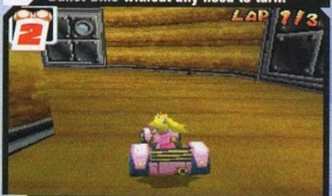


As the road goes back to pavement, nail the sharp left turn with a powerslide.

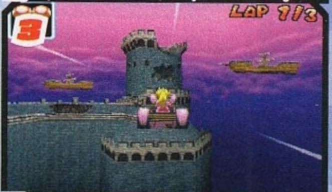
AIRSHIP FORTRESS



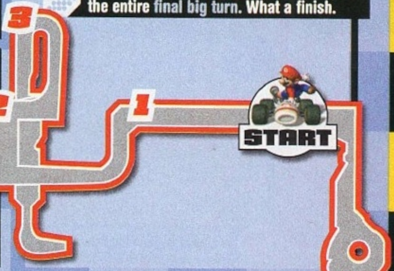
Stay to the left – you should avoid all the Bullet Bills without any need to turn.



In the room of boxes, zig-zag through and pull a snaked boost if you can manage it.

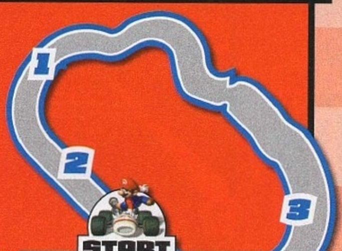


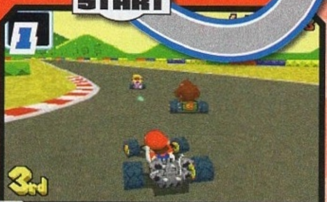
You should be able to powerslide down the entire final big turn. What a finish.



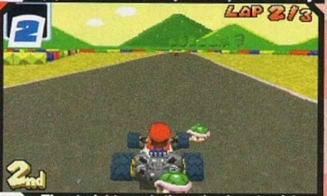
SHELL CUP

MARIO CIRCUIT

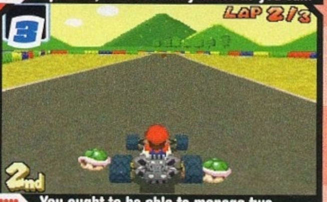




Powerslide around the corner with the pipes and avoid the piranha plants – easy.

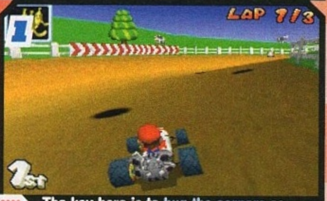


The straightaway's the only place to pick up items, so hit as many boxes as you can.

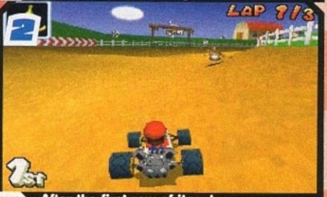


You ought to be able to manage two mini-boosts on the final turn.

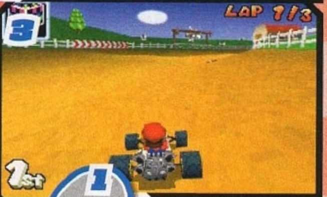
MOO MOO FARM



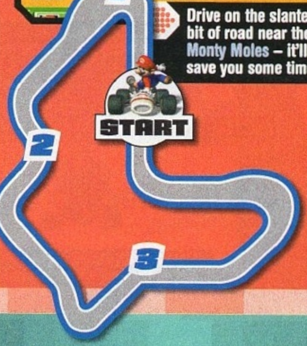
The key here is to hug the corners as tightly as possible to gain time.



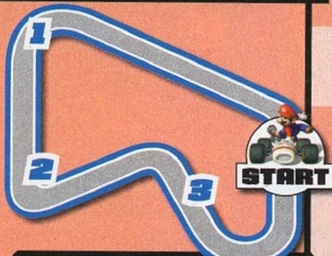
After the first row of item boxes, you can snake around an S-curve.

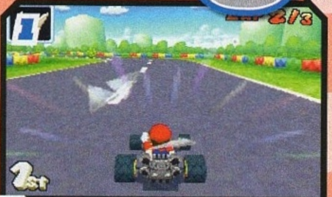


Drive on the slanted bit of road near the Monty Moles – it'll save you some time.

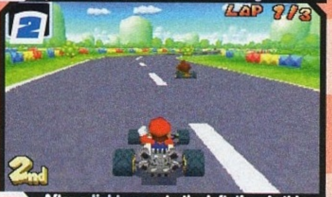


PEACH CIRCUIT

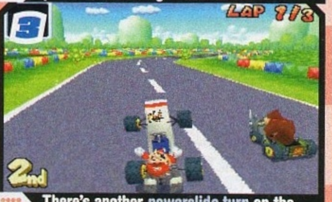




If you're quick, you can make two powerslide boosts off the first big corner.

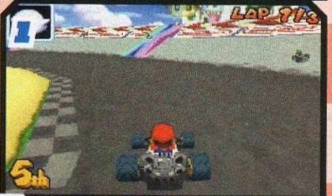


After a light curve to the left, there's this powerslideable right hand bend.

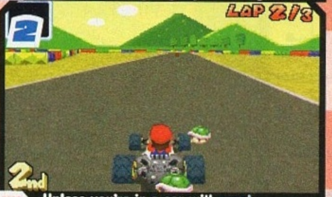


There's another powerslide turn on the final right before the finish.

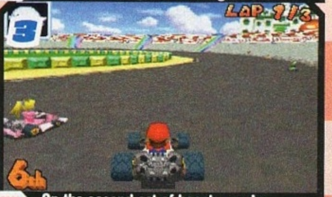
LUIGI CIRCUIT



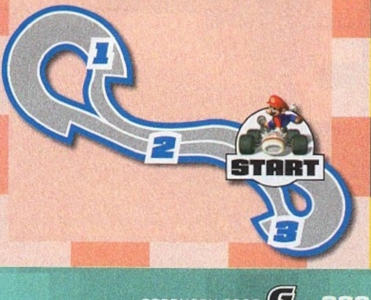
If the Chain Chomp's just retreated, save time by heading slightly to the right here.



Unless you're in a car with weak acceleration, it's best to hug the bend.

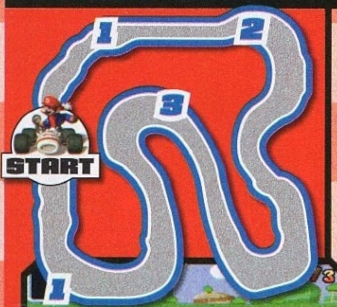


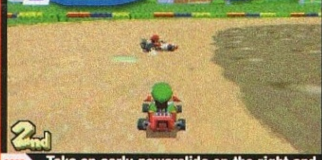
On the second set of boosts, you're definitely better off hugging the corner.



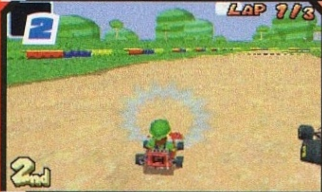
BANANA CUP

DONUT PLAINS

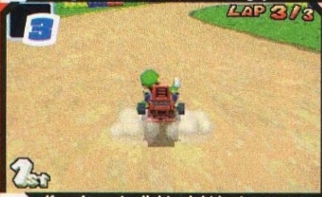




Take an early powerslide on the right and grab an item box on the way.

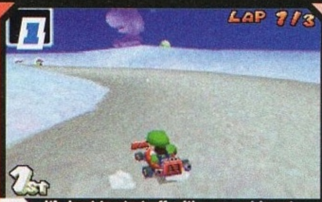


If you've got a mushroom, boost through the grass here and across this gap.

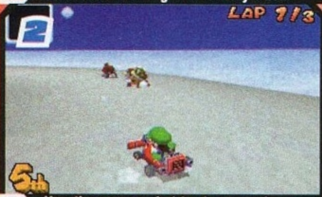


If you've got a lightweight kart, you can always try driving through the dirt.

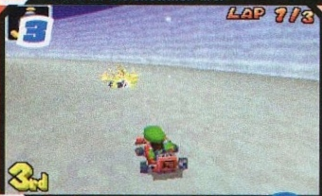
FRAPPE SNOWLAND



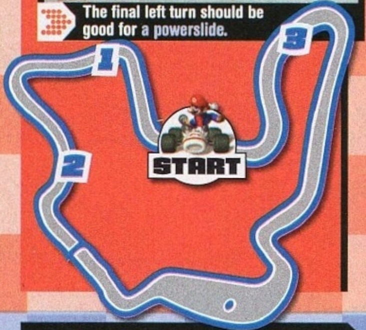
It's best to start off with a speed boost, then veer to the right of this icy track.



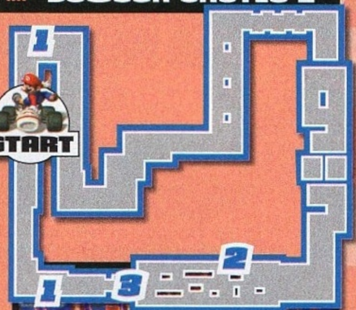
Hug the corners, but try to remember where all the snowmen are.

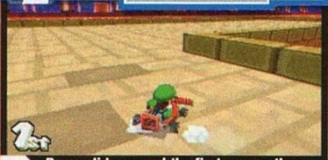


The final left turn should be good for a powerslide.

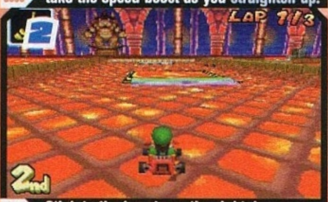


BOWSER CASTLE 2

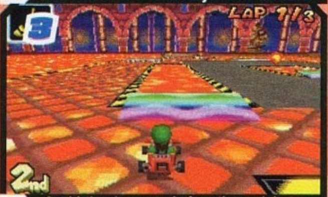




Powerslide around the first corner, then take the speed boost as you straighten up.

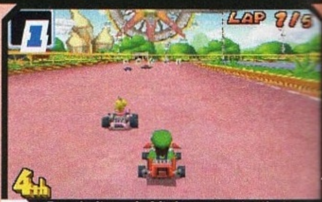


Stick to the boosts on the right, because the central ones launch you into the lava.

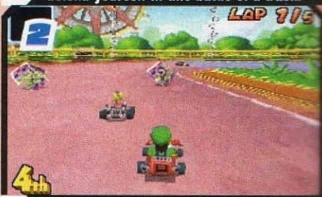


Avoid the thwomps before the end, but they shouldn't give you too much trouble.

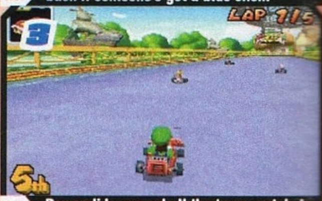
BABY PARK



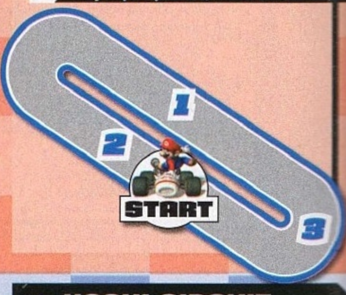
Dangle items behind you constantly to defend yourself in this battle of a track.



This is a track where it's worth pulling back if someone's got a blue shell.

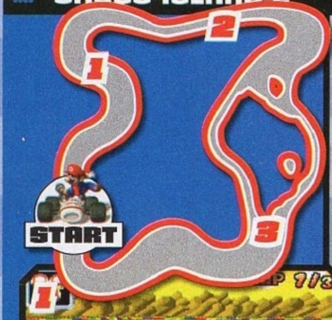


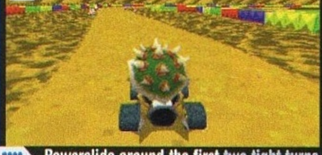
Powerslide around all the turns, natch, to stay in pole position, unlike we are here.



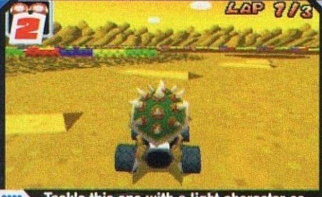
LIGHTNING CUP

CHOCO ISLAND 2

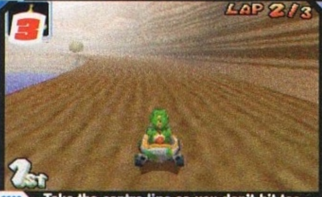




Powerslide around the first two tight turns – couldn't do that in the SNES version.

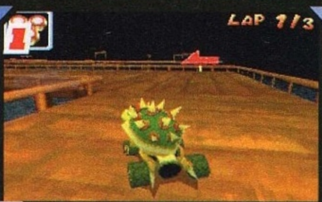


Tackle this one with a light character so the mud puddle doesn't slow you down.

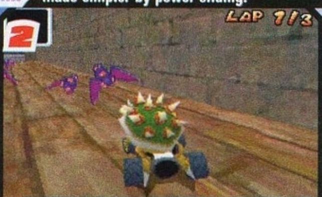


Take the centre line so you don't hit too many bumps and slow down too much.

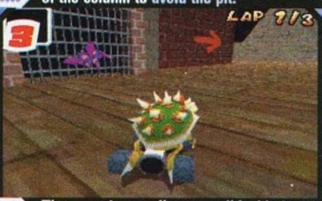
BANSHEE BOARDWALK



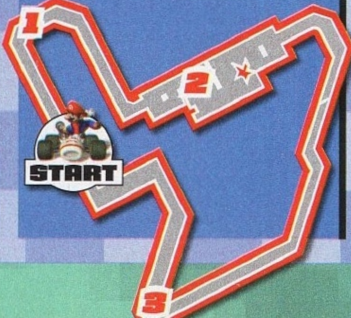
There are two sharp turns at the start, made simpler by power sliding.



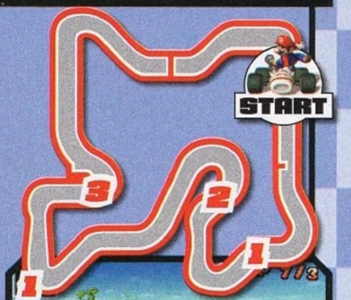
Inside the house, go right, then stay right of the column to avoid the pit.

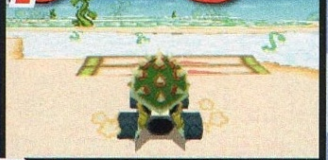


There are two easily powerslideable turns just before the end of the track.

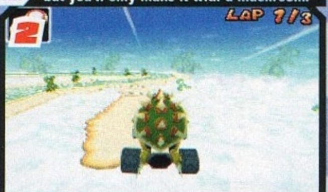


SKY GARDEN

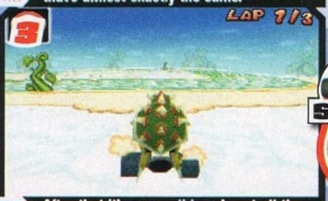




There's a shortcut almost straight ahead, but you'll only make it with a mushroom.

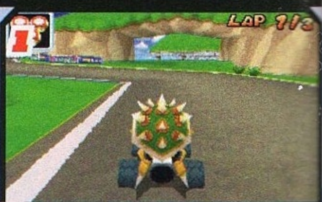


After a bend, there's another shortcut that's almost exactly the same.

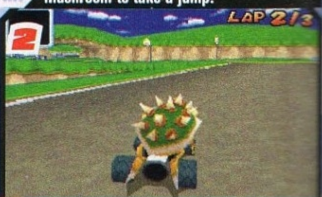


After that it's powerslides almost all the way to the end, which is a relief.

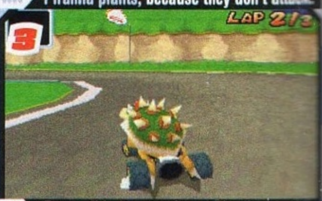
YOSHI CIRCUIT



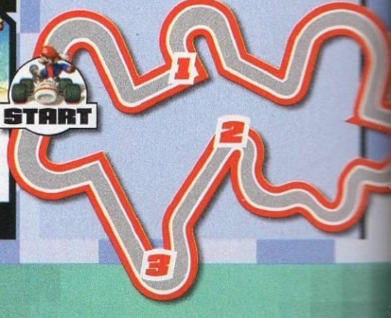
Boost underneath this archway with a mushroom to take a jump.



There's no need to worry about the Piranha plants, because they don't attack.

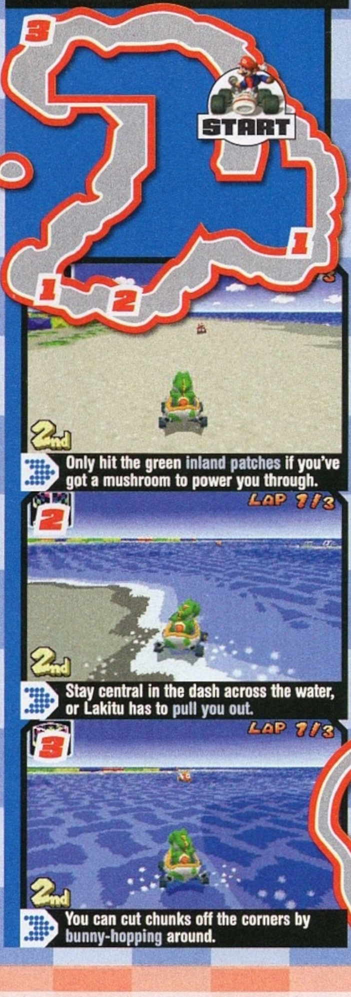


Powerslide boost twice on the final huge hairpin – it's excellent stuff.



LEAF CUP

KOOPA BEACH

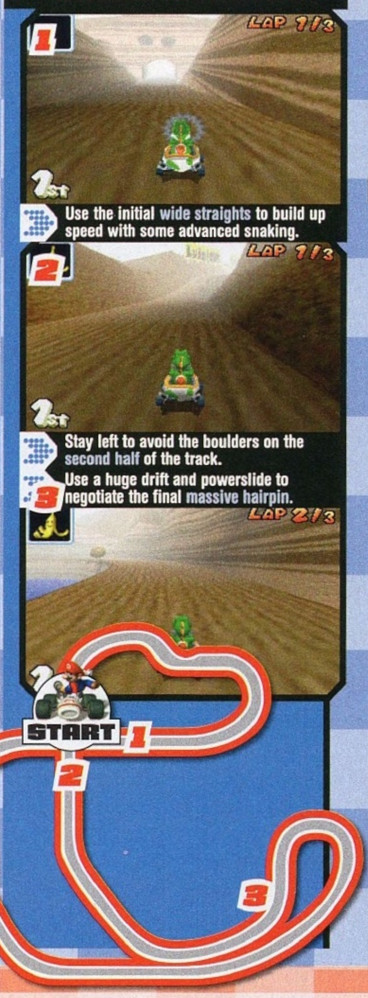


Only hit the green inland patches if you've got a mushroom to power you through.

Stay central in the dash across the water, or Lakitu has to pull you out.

You can cut chunks off the corners by bunny-hopping around.

CHOCO MOUNTAIN

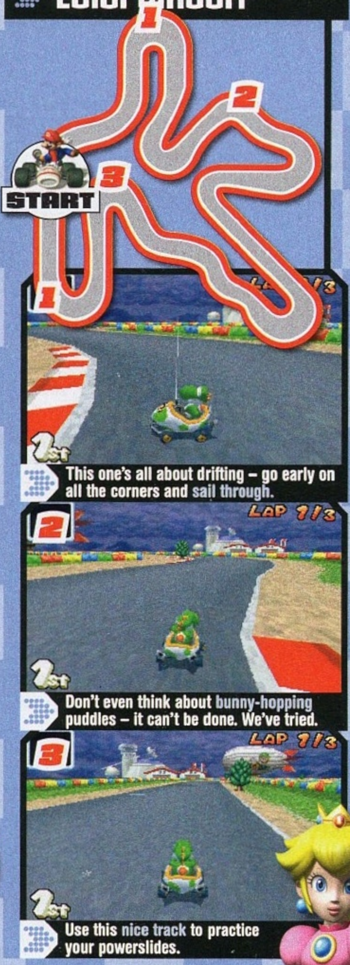


Use the initial wide straights to build up speed with some advanced snaking.

Stay left to avoid the boulders on the second half of the track.

Use a huge drift and powerslide to negotiate the final massive hairpin.

LUIGI CIRCUIT

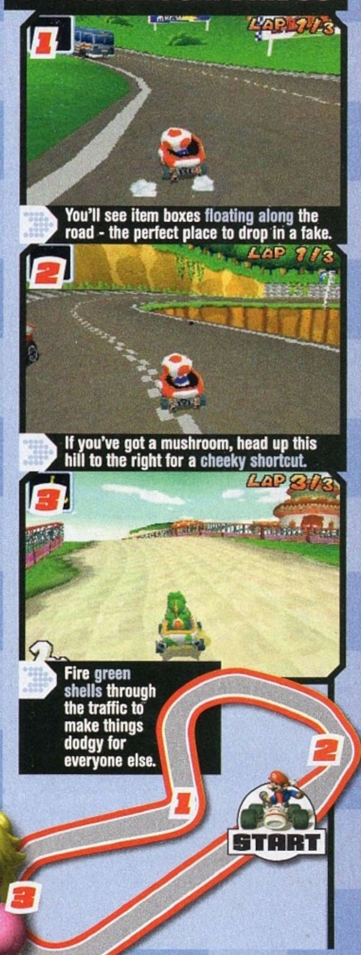


This one's all about drifting – go early on all the corners and sail through.

Don't even think about bunny-hopping puddles – it can't be done. We've tried.

Use this nice track to practice your powerslides.

MUSHROOM BRIDGE



You'll see item boxes floating along the road - the perfect place to drop in a fake.

If you've got a mushroom, head up this hill to the right for a cheeky shortcut.

Fire green shells through the traffic to make things dodgy for everyone else.

PLAYING ONLINE

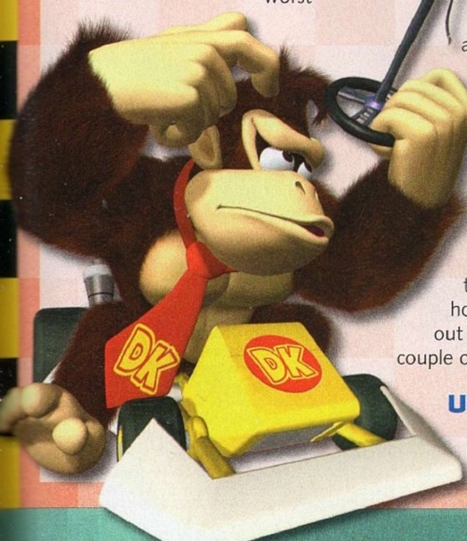
In a way, playing *Mario Kart* is easier online because the computer can't gang up on you. In practice it's much, much harder, because everybody's better than you. Unless you're up with the elite karters already, playing at this level's all about spoiling and mauling anybody good. Here are our top tactics:

DEFENDING

The worst thing about *Mario Kart* is being ahead – you get the worst power-ups, and everybody picks on you. If there's a kart coming up close behind you, pay attention to what items they've got – if it's a shell, you need to grab an item and 'trail' it behind you (hold L) to defend.

ATTACKING

If a rival character hasn't got any items, it's often best to slipstream them instead of attacking immediately – this works best with heavy karts, because if they catch up they'll automatically bash any adversary out of the way. Another good tactic with Bowser, Wario and Kong is to drift into the opposition on corners, cutting down on your own turning circle and hopefully taking them out of the play for a couple of seconds.



USE THE MAP

With minimal multi-tasking, you should be able to keep tabs on where the opposition are and use the map as a range-finder. If someone's coming up behind – banana them. At the same time, keep glancing down to see if anyone's got an item they could use to scupper you.

SPOIL THEM UP

Top players will always try to use shortcuts, and messing up their approach line will a) Make them fear you and b) Ruin their day. A well-placed red shell as someone approaches a jump can often knock them into oblivion and lose them 10 seconds, and even a lightning strike or an inky will throw them off the racing line for long enough.

USE BANANAS WISELY

Good players will always go for the riskiest shortcuts – use this against them by putting bananas on difficult bends, after boosters and just before jumps. Fake boxes are the same – try leaving them on jumps where rivals literally won't be able to tell the difference until they've already taken off.

WHAT YOU GET

Nailing each Grand Prix unlocks you a new racer. Also, for ultimate challenge, beating both 150cc Grand Prix earns you the super-tough mirror mode.

DAISY

Get gold in every cup on 50cc Retro mode

Daisy's a medium racer, and an awful lot like Peach in stats and style.

WALUIGI

Get gold on every cup in 100cc Retro mode

Stupid name, decent racer. Waluigi's about the same weight as Luigi, surprisingly enough.

DRY BONES

Get gold on every cup in 50cc Nitro mode.

A skeletal version of a Koopa, Dry Bones is a light racer with excellent acceleration and decent off-road driving.

R.O.B.

Get gold on every cup in 150cc Mirror Mode Nitro mode.

R.O.B. is metal, which makes him very heavy and terrible off-track. His top speed's good, though.

TIPSTER
Mark Green

Time to complete:
15 hours on Perfect Agent.
Best bit:
The battle over a square kilometre of dataDyne launch pad on Datacore Demolition.
Hardest bit:
Trinity Infiltration on Perfect Agent – security, scientists and a very Southern welcome.

KNOW HOW TO...

Put everyone else in the shade in *Perfect Dark Zero* Online

PERFECT DARK ZERO

WHERE ARE YOU STUCK?

'Where's Dr Caroll on Trinity Infiltration?'
Hack into the blue and white panel outside the first lift and you'll be shown the way.
'How do I get to the CamSpy point on Temple Surveillance?'
Look for a block behind you, then shoot into onto the switch just ahead.
'This massive jungle is hurting my head.'
After the opening battle, grab X-Ray Goggles from the chap near the dropship and a FAC-16 from the locked box nearby.

ESSENTIAL TACTICS

Bleeding all over the snow? Leaving your limbs in the desert? Losing valuable fragments of brain through bullet-shaped holes in your skull? Learn how to raise your game and rise up the *Perfect Dark Zero* leaderboards with a quartet of quality tips. The only thing we can't offer is a skull plaster.

HEADSHOT!
MAIN STREET

BE SENSITIVE

The default sensitivity settings aren't well suited to everyone. Go into Options and fiddle with the numbers until you can track a zig-zagging Live player's head.

KNOW YOUR ROLL

Jo's roly-poly isn't all *that* useful against crack shots, but in moments of confusion – ambushes, sniper attacks – it gets you out of trouble fast.

TAKE COVER

Make a mockery of your rivals in Solo and Dark Ops. Pull Jo's hips next to a wall and tap Ⓐ to take cover. Use pistols: the butt of big guns can be spotted.

HEADSHOTS

Don't waste time with the left trigger unless you're in cover or out of sight. Learn to walk with your head held high – the sights tilted up for instant headshots.

THE BEST WEAPONS

Whether you're going it alone against your Xbox 360's brain or fighting over the phoneline with Americans who keep telling each other to shut up, use these weapons to come out victorious when gun meets gun and svelte superspy lady meets that strange blonde one with practically nothing on.

CMP-150

"The hummingbird of death" it says here – such a quiet little thing. But dangerous, for sure.

GOOD FOR: Fizzing through armour and helmets. With dual wielding, you're an unstoppable killing machine.

BAD FOR: Accuracy – use it in short bursts, otherwise the targeting reticule balloons.

SOLO: Crazed enemies crowding around like mums at a jumble sale? Use it like a fireman's hose, aiming for the gut then swinging up for headshots.

ONLINE: A Deathmatch demigod – we hang back and wait for battles to kick off elsewhere, then storm in with both triggers on 'go' to mop up.

PAIR IT WITH: The Combat Shield. The CMP is the heaviest gun you can wield in one hand.

FAC-16

The most powerful weapon in the game? The enemy might as well pack up and go home.

GOOD FOR: Any Live game. Targeted grenades + assault rifling + 4x zoom = death on a plate.

BAD FOR: Not much. The grenade reload can be slow, so make sure your aim's spot-on for instant kills.

SOLO: Stealth levels with enemies coming out of their pores, like Trinity Infiltration. Slap the silencer on and maul enemies who just aren't paying attention.

ONLINE: The perfect Deathmatch weapon. Grenades explode with a secondary blast, the smoke masks your intentions, and burst fire puts any stragglers out of their misery.

PAIR IT WITH: A close-range beauty like the ViBlade.

HAWK BOOMERANG

Odd choice? The power and reach of this spinny blade is already ruining Live matches...

GOOD FOR: Defence. Take cover behind a corner with Ⓐ, let rip, and no-one else stands a chance.

BAD FOR: Big, open maps like Bridge in Solo.

SOLO: Just the job for Temple Surveillance: we slice neck as we run, protecting ourselves from Phantoms with the shield.

LIVE: Keeping areas to yourself on Onslaught and Infection, in close-quarters indoors maps like Subway. You're invisible on radar unless you hit someone (in which case, they're dead).

PAIR IT WITH: A Shotgun or ViBlade, for mopping up any supergods who manage to evade the flying metal.

MULTI-MINE

Proximity mines on LB; remote mines on RB; all detonated with the left trigger.

GOOD FOR: Protecting yourself when you're holed up in a room or massively outnumbered.

BAD FOR: Close combat and packed levels – mines aren't fussy about whose team you're on when they blow.

SOLO: Good for levels where packs of enemies lie in wait for you, such as Temple Surveillance and the first stages of the Bridge.

ONLINE: Best for Dark Ops Onslaughts where defence is the aim of the day. We line the walls, then let rip.

PAIR IT WITH: An effective sniper rifle like the Jackal – the mines then act as a last resort for nosey parkers.

MATCH YOUR TACTICS

Dual-wielding in *PDZ* is more simplistic than in *Halo 2* – you can't simultaneously point two different weapons at the enemy. But by filling your weapons slots carefully, you *can* ensure you've got the best weapon combination for *your* style of Dark Ops play. Flick between guns with Ⓨ, and break some face.

CAMPERS

You'll be wanting the Jackal, the sure-fire megasniping monstrosity that's going to make 2020 a slightly frightening place to live. Carry the Shotgun for those who get too close.

BOT-ATAC IS WINNING (2 points)

RUN AND GUN

Use the RCP-90's secondary function for tracking down trouble – and then the FAC-16 to stuff bullet and grenade down the enemy's gob until they've had all they can eat and fall face down.

CRACK SHOTS

The DY357 cuts through armour like a laser-knife through butter, guaranteeing a headshot if your aim is true. The meaty Jackal is your long-range option, with its deafening one-hit kills.

NERVOUS

Just starting out on Live or nerves cut to shreds by a car backfiring outside? The Shotgun and SuperDragon have the ideal all-purpose power to make you feel safe.

MULTI-PLAYER MAPS

Tips for Live level variants that work right across the board...

DESERT

SMALL: On tiny maps like this, we like to hang around outside. All the other fools play hunt-the-enemy in the corridors, then get caught up in a firefight, run backwards – and walk straight into our sights. You can also pick people off on balconies.

BASE 1+2: The tunnels inside the bases make a great hiding place for healthy players in Infected matches. If you're playing the skeleton, sidestep slowly around corners and look for legs or arms to shoot.

BASE 3+4: In Capture the Flag, set one of your team up as a 'sleeper'. He'll set up shop in the centre of the map, and stay well away from the trigger – thereby not showing up on radar. Until the enemy flag-carrier strolls by.

OLD TOWN

SMALL: When defending on Onslaught, we frustrate attackers by bunging SuperDragon bullets and grenades *through* narrow gaps – even the tiny holes that mark out breakable walls can be shot through, which really upsets anyone trying to Demo Kit their way in.

BASE 1+2: Wondering why everyone else is managing to run so fast? They've switched their weapons off. Press D-Up at the start of Dark Ops games to start sprinting. It only takes a single press of Ⓨ to whip your gun out of your pocket again if need be.

BASE 3+4: Sniper-friendly maps like this make travel risky. So bring *GM's* patented 'radar bluff' into play. Stroll one way across the map, fire, then immediately switch to a different route when you radar turns blue again.

SUBWAY

SMALL: Hints for players descending stairs: walk backwards. There's often a hollow behind steps that's the *perfect* spot for shooting someone right up where the sun don't shine. If you find space behind stairs. aet down and wait.

BASE 1+2: You can clamber over small walls by pushing forward – getting the drop on a ground-floor enemy, or escaping a top-floor firefight. Press L Ⓑ to roll as you fall to avoid losing health through broken bones.

BASE 3+4: Sniping isn't just for sniper rifles. Stand up on the top floor of Subway with the SuperDragon, and FAC-16 lets you clean the lower floors of filth without getting you fingers dirty. Aiming tip: put your sights a good few paces *ahead* of the enemy.

URBAN

SMALL: Small maps are great place for 'banking' kills. While you're alive, lay down as many UGLs, Laptop Guns and mines as you dare: someone's bound to barge into them even after you buy the big one. The RCP90 will ensure you don't trip the traps yourself.

BASE 2+4: The Jetpac isn't just for zipping around the sky like you're some kind of mechsuited bullet-spitting god. Use it on Urban to get on top of the central tower, then ditch your metal suit and crouch down for an ideal sniping spot.

BASE 1+3: Head the opposite way from your sheep-like flock of teammates in Dark Ops matches. The enemy usually camps out on the Offramp, so take them by surprise by approaching from the reverse angle.

TEMPLE

SMALL: Because no-one's mown the lawn here, you can emerge from the undergrowth and take enemies by surprise. Perfect time to test your weapon-stealing skills, then: press D-Up, then use R Ⓑ to make a grab for the goodies. You get full ammo for it.

BASE 1+3: In levels like Temple, get behind pillars the 'traditional' way and they'll provide just as decent protection. Enemies run in little circles around obstacles – run faster, and you can bash their back.

BASE 2+4: The Ball Court – the long room at the top of the map – has the setting sun streaming down on it. Block the light with your body, and other players will have a hard job making you out against the glare.

TOWER

SMALL: Stay away from ladders and ziplines, especially in the Tower. You've got your back to people, you can't defend, you can't shoot – you're dead. Still, there are rewards for reaching rooms at the top of ladders, so have someone guard you if you can.

BASE 1+2: Weapons that bounce off corners – the MagSec's secondary function, grenades – are a sneaky way of 'owning' areas like the outer ring of Tower. Chuck Falcon ammo forward with RⒷ: the spitting bullets will catch someone unawares.

BASE 3+4: Tower's bases are clouded with steam, making them the ideal snipering spots. Smoke from grenades and mines obscures just as well. Flashbangs can create killing opportunities through enemy eye-hurt.

RCP-90

A fatter, meatier version of the CMP150, with a secondary function for others to die for.

GOOD FOR: Lends itself well to Dark Ops, where the radar is usually emptier than Peter Andre's mind.

BAD FOR: Hiding. As one of the most powerful SMGs, it'll have you hanging around on radar for an age.

SOLO: Take it to The Bridge – it works just as well as the stationary machine gun on the right balcony, and helps you pick out the dataDyners from the rubble.

ONLINE: Dark Ops – pick people out with the secondary function and you can snipe them from a distance or hammer them with speed-metal at close range.
PAIR IT WITH: Anything you like.

SHOTGUN

You can almost *feel* people's guts imploding as they get on the business end of this.

GOOD FOR: When you're up close and personal – perfect for tense Dark Ops battles, and a good beginner's weapon.

BAD FOR: Long-distance kills. You'll need to be good at dodging during the reload, too.

SOLO: Levels like Laboratory Rescue, where guards have a habit of running straight for you. They regret it.

ONLINE: Our favourite Dark Ops weapon – goad someone into wandering around a corner to meet you, and they'll be blown back into 2004.

PAIR IT WITH: Anything more accurate at long distance, as using the Shotgun at range is useless.

SUPER DRAGON

Two killer weapons in one: a rapid-fire rifle and a bouncy grenade launcher.

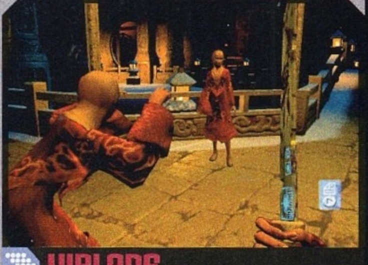
GOOD FOR: Dispersing big crowds – point it at the floor and press RⒷ to put a stop to any party.

BAD FOR: Close-quarters fighting: the grenades risk taking you *and* your teammates out.

SOLO: Perfect for Trinity Infiltration, where crowds of security teams can be turned into a corpse fountain.

LIVE: Any Dark Ops Onslaught battle, where both attack and defence clump together in groups. Hang around near doorways, or look for some grenade-width gaps.

PAIR IT WITH: A thrown weapon that doesn't leave you lighting up the radar like an exploding sun.



VIBLADE

Our first Live match getting cut to shreds by this woke us up to its lethality.

GOOD FOR: Sneaking around undetected: you don't show up on radar when you're going slash-mental.

BAD FOR: Long-range kills, clearly.

SOLO: Stealthy levels like Laboratory Rescue. Tiptoe up behind someone and bloody up your blade before they realise what's happening.

ONLINE: Best for acres-wide levels like Desert, where it's easier to sneak up undetected. We flick the shield on, approach without fear of getting shot, then make like Zorro.

PAIR IT WITH: The RCP-90 or the Shotgun for pinpointing nearby enemies, all ready for a cutting.

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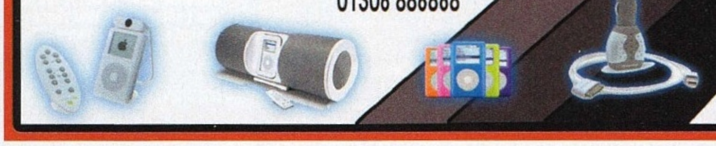

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WIN! TORINO 2006 WINTER OLYMPICS

Which country is Torino in?

A) ITALY
B) SPAIN
C) AUSTRALIA

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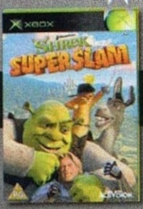
WIN! SHREK SUPERSLAM



Who does the voice for *Shrek* in the films?

A) EDDIE MURPHY
B) MIKE MYERS
C) TOM CRUISE

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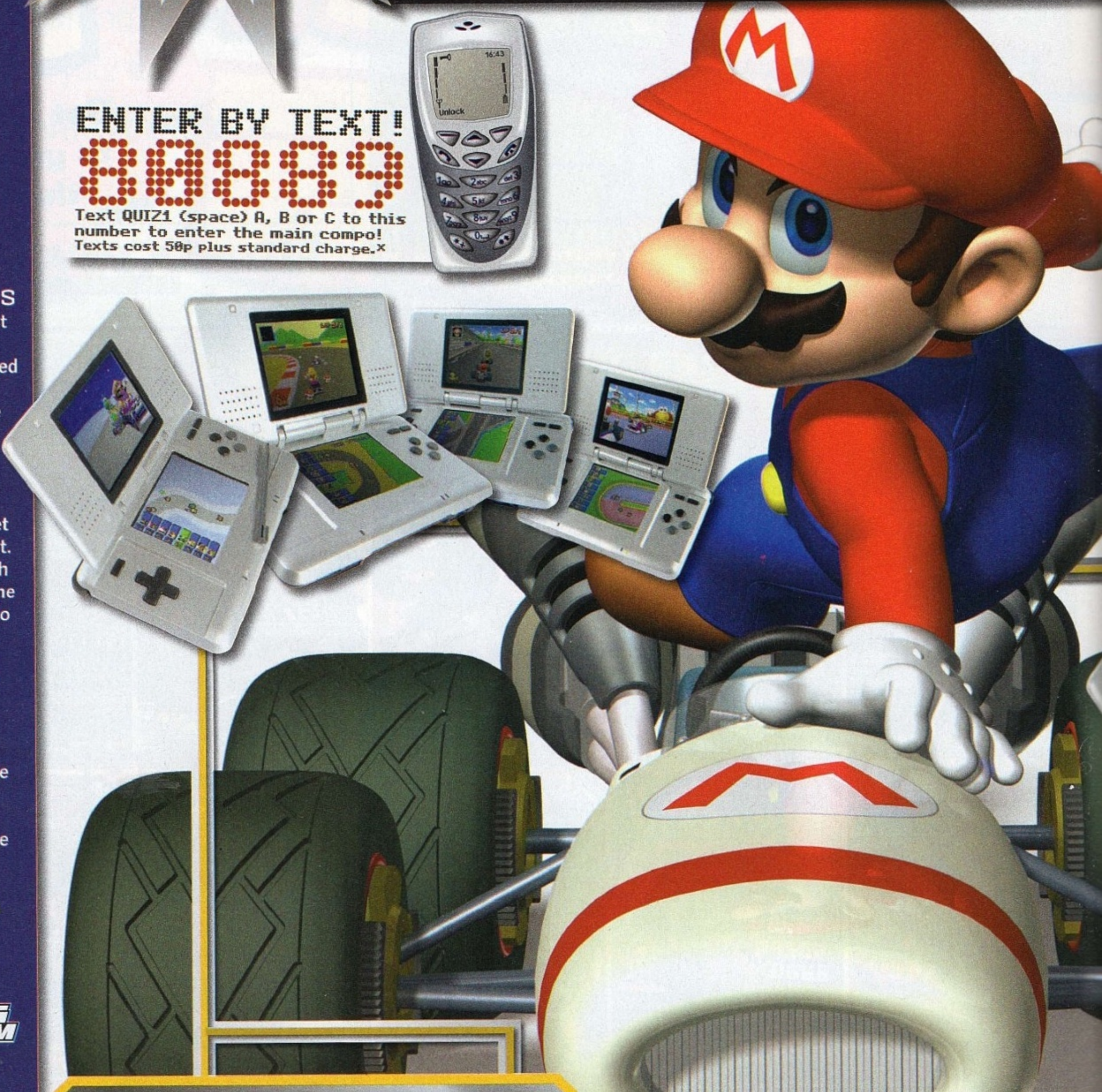
ENTER BY TEXT! 80889

Text QUIZ1 (space) A, B or C to this number to enter the main compo! Texts cost 50p plus standard charge.*



ONLINE ACTION FOR EVERYONE YOU KNOW!

Win a DS, copy of *Mario Kart* and WiFi connector for yourself and nine of your friends

December saw the release of one our most wanted DS games of the year, *Mario Kart* DS. And it's every bit as good as we wanted it to be – especially online.

Now you can play it for yourself, or the way it should be played – against all your mates. Nintendo is giving away no less than 10 DS consoles, each with a copy of *Mario Kart* and a WiFi USB connector (worth £30 each) so you can get yourself online, wireless connection or not. And this whole prize – that's £1,500 worth of console and games – will be won by one lucky reader. If you're the winner, it's up to you which of your friends and family are worthy enough to receive their very own DS. A tip from us – make sure they're not as good at *Mario Kart* as you are for guaranteed first place every race…

You can start planning who you might like to give your Nintendo DSs to on these pages. But there's nothing to stop you keeping the lot! Simply answer this question and sent it in us using one of the methods below…

Which of these *Mario Kart* characters is a top light-weight racer?
a) Bowser
b) Donkey Kong
c) Toad

Closing date: 8th February 2006

THREE WAYS TO ENTER:

1.WRITE TO US

Scribble your answers on the form, cut it out, stuff it into an envelope and send it to The Ten Kartmandments compo, GamesMaster, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

2. EMAIL US

Email your answers, with your name, address, age and telephone number, to gamesmastercompo@futurenet.co.uk

3. TEXT US

Just text QUIZ1 (space) A, B, or C to 80889*. Main comp is 50p plus standard charge.

MATE SELECT MENU!

Start picking your line-up of fellow Karters in case you win. You could write them in below and cross out anyone who displeases you from now on!

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FRIEND # 2
FRIEND # 3
FR

*Text messages cost 50p inc VAT (for main compo) and 25p inc VAT (for other compos) plus your normal text cost.

WIN! TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN SK8LAND

Which of these is a genuine skateboarding trick?

DS

A) BACKSIDE BLUNTSLIDE
B) KICK UP AND FALL DOWN
C) THE FLYING NUN

3 COPIES TO BE WON

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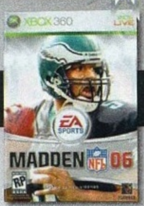
WIN! MADDEN NFL 06



Which stadium is home to the Miami Dolphins?

XBOX 360

A) DOLPHINS STADIUM
B) KILLER WHALE STADIUM
C) THE AQUARIUM

3 COPIES TO BE WON

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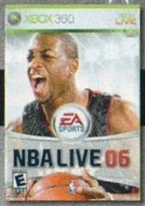
WIN! NBA LIVE 06



What do the letters NBA stand for?

XBOX 360

A) NAT. BASKETBALL ASS.
B) NATIONAL BALL GAME
C) NATIONAL BOWLING ASS.

3 COPIES TO BE WON

TEXT QUIZ6 (SPACE) A,B,OR C TO 87103

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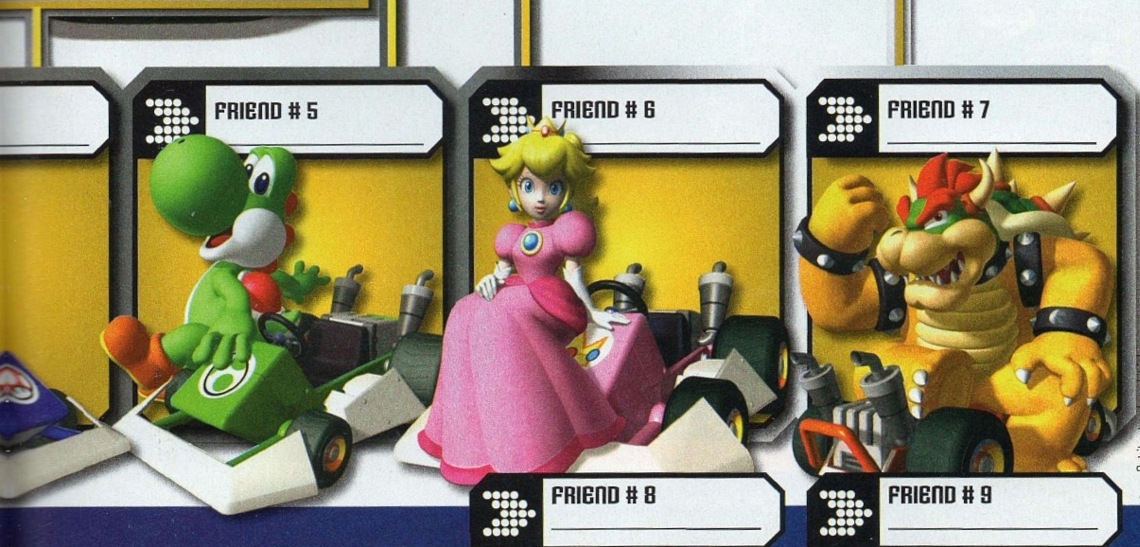

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MARIO KART DS

Which of these *Mario Kart* characters is a top light-weight racer?

☐ a) Bowser
☐ b) Donkey Kong
☐ c) Toad

TORINO 2006 WINTER OLYMPICS (PS2)

Which country is Torino in?

☐ a) Italy
☐ b) Spain
☐ c) Australia

SHREK SUPERSLAM (XB)

Who does the voice for *Shrek* in the films?

☐ a) Eddie Murphy
☐ b) Mike Myers
☐ c) Tom Cruise

TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN SK8LAND (DS)

Which of these is a genuine skateboarding trick?

☐ a) Backside bluntslide
☐ b) Kick up and Fall Down
☐ c) The Flying Nun

MADDEN NFL 06 (X360)

Which stadium is home to the Miami Dolphins?

☐ a) Dolphins Stadium
☐ b) Killer Whale Stadium
☐ c) The Aquarium

NBA LIVE 06 (X360)

What do the letters NBA stand for?

☐ a) National Basketball Association
☐ b) National Ball game Association
☐ c) National Bowling Association

Send to

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GM 166 WINNERS

CRASH WINNER: Karl Humble, Northumberland

RUNNERS UP: James Cook, Fife, Robert Allison, Inverness, David Brown, Clydebank, Oliver Clark, Driffield, John Brannan Duffy, Dundee. Jake, Bristol

F.E.A.R: Steven Watson, Dumfries, Brandon Day, Bedford, Chris Alde, Lowestoft, Matt Hillier, Swindon, Stuart Blair, Washington

WALLACE & GROMIT: Christopher Jay, Caerphilly, Michael Rooney, Belfast, Daniel Souch , Clifton, Craig McFarlane, Surrey, Adam Brooks, Wakefield

TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND: Brandon Day, Bedford, Chris Alde, Lowestoft, Matt Hillier, Wiltshire

X-MEN LEGENDS 2: RISE OF THE APOCALYPSE: Stuart Blair, Washington, Karen Gray, Stunwell, George Mumford, Skegness

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- DRIVER 4
- THE ELDER SCROLLS 4: OBLIVION
- BLAZING ANGELS: SQUADRONS OF WW2
- CRASHDAY
- BLACK
- FULL AUTO
- STAR WARS: EMPIRE AT WAR
- GHOST RECON ADVANCED WARFIGHTER
- VIEWTIFUL JOE: DOUBLE TROUBLE
- MEGAMAN 5 BATTLE NETWORK: DOUBLE TEAM DS
- DEAD TO RIGHTS RECKONING

Cut it out and send it in!

This is the plan anyway. Alas all contents and gifts are subject to change. Sorry 'bout that.

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What do you want to see in the next *GM*?

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☐ or something else? Write in here ______________________

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M = 1 3
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No One Lives Forever
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P = 1 6
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Suffering: Ties That Bind
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T = 2 0
Teenage M. Ninja Turtles 2
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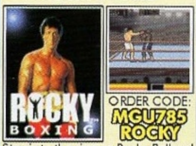

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